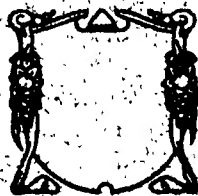




# Love and Pride

By

JOHANNES STEFANSSON



## Dedication

**T**O those that help to bring about a truer understanding between their fellow-travellers and themselves on this journey of life, to those that extend love and sympathy to their unfortunate brothers and sisters, to those that strive to uplift humanity and develop fraternity on this earth is this book sincerely and cordially dedicated.

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

1920

**T**HIS novel is founded on the author's own experience. It is true to life. It goes to show that amassed wealth, when controlled by selfish and avaricious men, tends to corrupt and contaminate society, and that the bulk of people in this country gauge every idea by pecuniary consideration. It displays how the most sacred of human affairs—the conjugal affinity of man and woman—is often at the mercy of gold.

It outlines the terrible struggles of a great artist, who, although a master of music — the world's greatest art—was subject to merciless travesty of misunderstanding and prejudice, and was, therefore, treated as a weak-minded outcast by highly respected money tyrants, who understood and appreciated nothing but the music of currency.

The spiritual power of love is expounded vividly and with broad understanding.

The story explains an original ideal of the greatest of all human hopes—IMMORTALITY.

The novel is very interesting and deserves a careful reading.

The comments of the independent press are very favorable.

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## ERRATA

Page 12, line 18—For "spectators at the arrival of the immigrants we dealt," read "viewing the arrival of the immigrants we dealt."

Page 20, line 7—For "It would have immensely exulted his wife to hear the," read "It was therefore an episodic victory, when after."

Page 32, line 7—For "would have comprehended the strains of his natures," read "would have comprehended the strains of his raptures."

Page 37, line 18—For "and vociferous, were two unities in unified life-drawn," read "and vociferous, were two unities in unifying life-drama."

Page 38, line 43—For "Both cartered looks in order to drink nectars of bliss," read "Both bartered looks in order to drink nectars of bliss."

Page 39, lines 14 and 15—For "What book can that be?" Her interrogation a relentless obstetation," read "What book can that be?" Her interrogation an obstetation."

Page 39, line 25—For "emotion. "Our affair is a weird-like copre destination," read "emotion. "Our affair is a weird-like copredetermination."

Page 43, line 25—For "prove insurmountable, between us a million dollars, an," read "prove insurmountable, between us is a million dollars, an."

Page 49, lines 14 and 15—For "She kissed and pressed to his heart, eager as an indulgent child," read "She kissed him and nestled still more fain with his heart, like a very indulgent child."

Page 50, line 6—For "If you were not my own," read "If thou wert not my own."

Page 50, line 18—For "Not aim and work has shown," read "That aim and work has shown."

Page 54, line 18—For "only eager to shake the sweet sunshine but which," read "only eager to slake the sweet sunshine, but which."

Page 54, line 34—For "to a home of your own and to dedicate the best there is," read "to a home of our own and to dedicate the best there is."

Page 66, line 5—For "pain, devastation and disappointmentments and the hearts," read "pain, devastation and disappointmentments on the hearts."

Page 66, line 14—For "want of heart-isolating light," read "want of heart-insulating light."

Page 70, line 6—For "week or two in each. But dismissed on account of in-" read "week or two in each. But dismissal on account of in-"



Page 70, line 22—For "fl for any remunerative use, he was obliged to struggle," read "fit for any remunerative use, he was obliged to straggle."

Page 77, line 36—For "life, here in Winnipeg, after prolonged revels. These," read "life, here in Winnipeg, after prolonged revels. His."

Page 82, line 38—For "ing in azure blue and landing its pale brilliance," read "ing in azure blue, and lauding its pale brilliance."

Page 84, line 18—For "after we first met. I lay awake all through its dreamy," read "after we first met. I lay awake all through its dreary."

Page 87, line 44—For "are not above me, you are my equal. Arrogance is not," read "are not below me, you are my equal. Arrogance is not."

Page 90, line 24—"recount of a difficult case that the very man that was," read "an account of a difficult case, that the very man that was."

Page 93, line 28—For "planning one's destiny! He could eat far more at the 4," read "planning one's destiny! He could eat the more at the 4."

Page 97, line 12—For "She will have to by—unfortunately—," read "She will have to, but unfortunately—."

Page 98, line 32—For "Sanatorium without delay. She had gone there to in," read "Sanatorium without delay. She had gone thereto in."

Page 101, line 41—For "wealth. I have acquired a little for my family. But," read "wealth. But."

Page 102, line 23—For "Still our will wins predominate," protested Sir," read "Still our will must predominate," protested Sir."

Page 102, line 38—For "when you would take your great affections toward," read "when you would tend your great affections toward."

Page 107, line 29—For "criterion involved in these words compounded with ab-," read "criterion involved in these words compounded of ab-."

Page 118, line 25—For "nature. His mind resided in his liquor saloon, as usual," read "nature. His mind resided in his licuor-saloon, as usually."

Page 120, line 37—For "All this absolutely unnoticed by Lady Geraldine Max-," read "All this was absolutely unnoticed by Lady Geraldine Max-."

Page 123, line 27—For "sweet memories of his love stood before at the drowsy," read "sweet memories of his love stood before her at the drowsy."

Page 127, line 21—For "filled with tears and every soul was subjugated by the," read "filled with tears and every soul was sublimated by the."

Page 128, between lines 28 and 29, read: Sam Benson asked the musician to play "Lohengrin's Wedding March."

Page 128, line 41—For "The lover who had lost all in the pitiless pangs of," read "The lover, who had lost all in the pitiless fangs of."

Page 132, line 7—For "plained that it had been put up to vote whether Bene-," read "plained, that it had been put up to vote, whether good will or its equivalent, namely, benevolence."

Page 137, line 8—For "arrows of malice in the discourse cut deep into her," read "arrows of malice in their discourse cut deep into Alma's."

Page 137, line 11—For "long gone by days of courship, Alma connived of head," read "long-gone-by days of courtship, Alma connived of head."

Page 140, line 21—For "pressed his fingers to Thorkell's throat, half-way clos-," read "pressed their fingers to Thorkell's throat, half-way clos-."

Page 145, line 14—For "The fault is neither mine nor thine. It is nature's," read "The fault is neither mine nor yours. It is nature's."

Page 147, line 25—For "dered an immediate affection for the deadly pallid bella," read "dered an immediate affection the pallid bella."

Page 147, line 37—For "love this instead of the other," read "love this girl instead of the other."

Page 152, line 36—For "a doubt a fierce jealousy was working harm upon, try-," read "doubt a fierce jealousy was working harm upon him, try-."

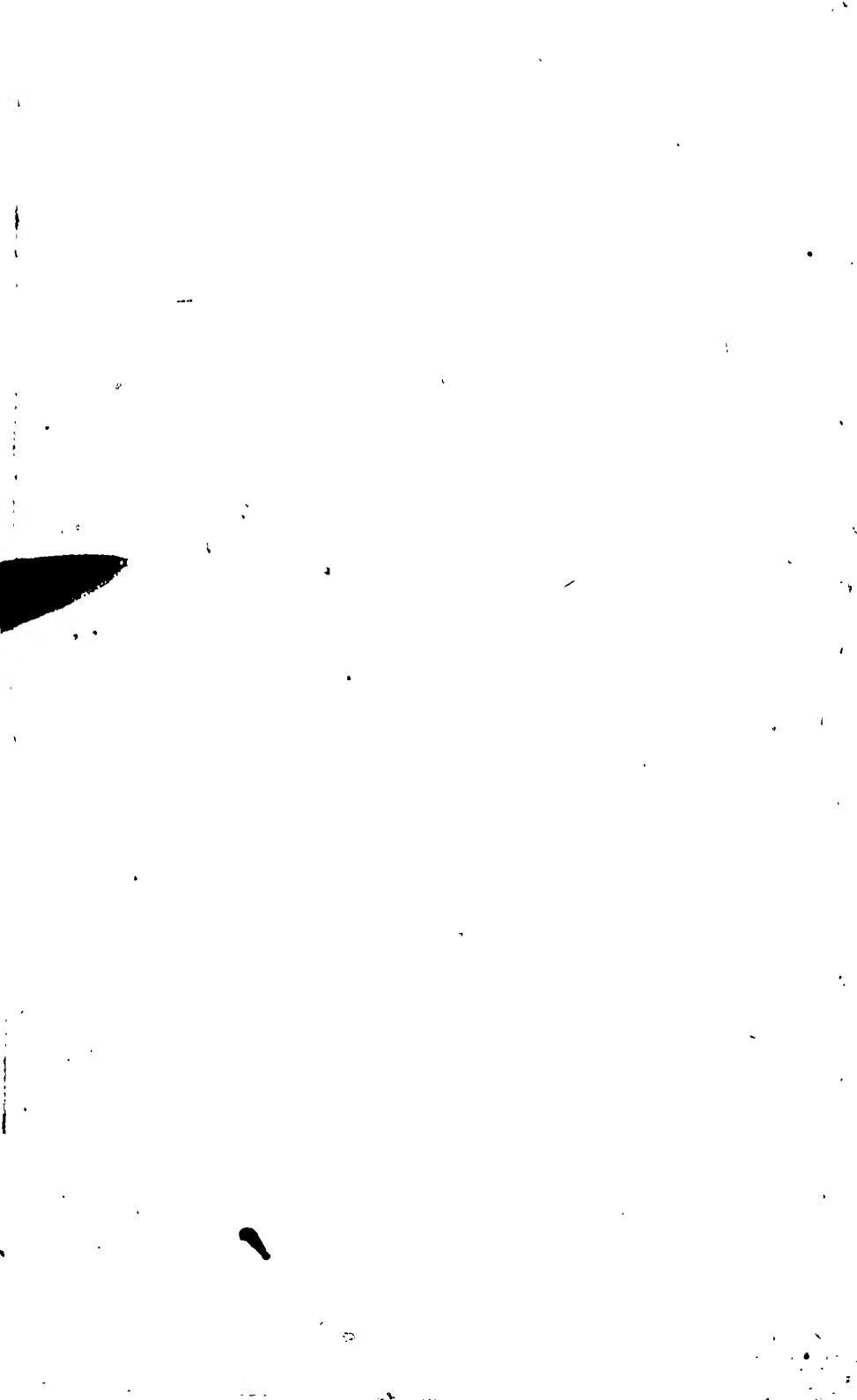
Page 153, line 33—For "easy? But why. And he continued his walking some-," read "easy. But why? And he continued his walking some-."

Page 154, line 1—For "it? He did not believe that any spirits traversed in," read "it? He did not believe that any spirits traversed."

Page 154, line 18—For "though that he had heard aright," read "though that he had heard right."

Page 159, line 35—For "set "for an son-in-law. But he could not wait for the," read "set "for a son-in-law. But he could not wait for the."

Page 160 line 10—For "kell to his painting, to his imprisonment, and scores," read "kell to his fate, pointing to his imprisonment and scores."



# LOVE AND PRIDE

## CHAPTER FIRST

### ARRIVAL

The Imperial Limited of the Canadian Pacific Railway pulled slowly and smoothly into the elaborate Winnipeg depot, built at the cost of hundreds of thousands of dollars. It was a big train and occupied solely by immigrants from Europe.

The waiting-room contained a dense multitude of Winnipeg citizens. Poor working men with wives were there to welcome friends or relatives, while well-off and wealthy men attended for curiosity's sake.

The mixed humanity of many nations inundated quickly the centre of the spacious station, the spectators forming a solid wall on both sides; the immigrants marched orderly through the depot, like an army of enhanced occupancy of the resourceful, golden Northwest. They proceeded along Main Street, from where they dispersed in all directions.

In the lead was a middle-aged, middle-sized man, with a grand air of self-indulgence and self-content. He wore a Prince Albert frock and upon his oval head rocked an old-fashioned derby. It was Hall Ladell, a wine merchant and liquor-saloon keeper. He was also a Dominion Immigration Authority and superintended the transmigration all the way from Europe. At the exit of the depot his wife and children joined him in company with his brother Eagle Ladell, a wealthy manufacturer.

"I wonder why—ha—these wine are imported in such—ha—large numbers?" said Eagle complacently, but with a pretended shudder.

"We need the over-population of Europe to swell our steadily increasing industries and to work on our unoccupied, untilled prairies," answered the important Hall, while his eyes opened and closed alternately, as if rotat-

ing rapidly on an invisible axle somewhere inside his oval skull.

"I fear—ha—our Dominion is being packed vit felons en vagrants—ha—and me opinion is—ha—tat tese abject craytures vil neber add to te hapliness—ha—op tis country—ha—nar become goot en loyhal citizhens of Canada—ha—and Great Britain—ha," retorted the manufacturer, biting and chewing every word as usually. He ceremoniously lighted a big, expensive cigar, handing his brother another of the fine brand. He then aroused his chauffeur, who was in a sweet chat with a pretty girl nearby, and harshly ordered that individual to have the manufacturer's big automobile in readiness, and thereupon invited the Dominion Authority and his wife and children for a pleasant drive. In front of Hall Ladell's wine-centre the auto came to a halt and a big case came to enrich its contents; that case contained joy-exceeding spirits such as champagne, Madeira, Oporto, cognac, Three-Star whisky, etc.

Before Pilatus Ladell's residence the manufacturer and politician stepped out to join the third brother. And in a cosy den in Pilatus' magnificent house (he was manager of his brother's box factory) the three brothers—Eagle, Hall and Pilatus—caroused and revelled until late next morning.

But as to the immigrants, many were disheartened and downcast. The reception cast diffused spells of apprehension and awe upon their minds, and naturally it was solitary, gloomy, dreary and death-like for the indigent foreigners.

The great majority of them were unable to speak a word in the tongue of the country; some were unknown to all and friendless. And surely they stared distressfully in the face. The electric lights flashing across and above the streets, illuminating the joyous, often reckless metropolis of the west, so prone to be fascinating, enticing, alluring, must have had an aspect of merciless repulsion before the mental vision of many a father and mother to whose protective arms a circle of children clung, relishing sights of ceaselessly altering scenes of wealth and beauty.

What a pain! What a despondency, and what a weight of contemptful, tearful feelings must have overtaken the reflections of parents who could not buy as

much as a piece of candy, yet seeing the sparkling child-eye speak even clearer and stronger than words could do about the many ornamental, lovely things on demonstration in the windows of the stores "de luxe," and the mother-eyes of many a penniless family saw things absolutely necessary, but had nothing to pay for them.

Riches, exuberance and extravagance, the ever true allies of injustice and tyranny, depict themselves more vampirously and cruelly to the all-forsaken immigrant than to any one else under any other circumstances.

Of two thousand immigrants passing through the depot only two were Icelanders. A young scholar with the Bachelor of Arts degree of the University of Reykjavik and his sister, a country maid. He was a true embodiment of virility. He was over six feet in height and with massive shoulders and a broad chest. His hair was curly and of a darkish hue. His full, dark-blue eyes wielded a powerful sway over everyone that looked into them. His nose was admirably formed. His lips were full and beautifully red and his cheeks were of charming white complexion, and all his appearance was that of almost incomparable manliness and elegance.

His name was Magnus Magnusson, and her initial name was Helga. She was a pretty, robust, healthy-looking girl with auburn hair, rosy cheeks and brown eyes. Both were dressed in an American fashion and made a very noticeable contrast to the rest of the transmigrators. They went by a quicker pace than some of the others through the station and looked neither to left nor right (they knew that no relative or acquaintance could be present), save once when Magnus's eyes met at a glance the daintiest girl he had ever seen, between a richly-dressed, fat, elderly woman and a corpulent, business-fashioned elderly man, evidently her parents.

Near the big entrance of the depot, on a broad street leading to the great thoroughfares of the city, they were beckoned by a well-dressed young gentleman, who addressed them with the true freedom of a stranger. He inquired if they had come across the water in company with the immigrants, and evinced a great surprise at their avowal of such a possibility.

While they were conversing he was arranging a small

camera to suit, but neither of the twins paid any attention to it.

"This is your sister, I s'pose," he remarked as they were about to part, and as he said this, a slight, red tinge swept over his handsome face. "What may your name be?" he added, ardently.

"Helga," answered Magnus, briskly. "An essential Icelandic name," he supplemented.

"Yes, it surely is, and it reminds me of Ormstunga Saga and other great names of your old history."

Helga crimsoned, and the deep red enriching her rosy, golden cheeks evinced enchantingly her heartfelt, innocent rapture.

"I hope I meet you both again," emphasized the sociable, friendly gentleman as he shook hands with them; their eyes met significantly, speaking life's greatest truths with lasting, loveful reverences.

And without further delay they hurried to a suitable place for supper and lodgment. They were rather tired from the long train journey and longed to enjoy a good rest.

And when he had bid his sister good-night and locked his room, he desired to fall asleep immediately.

But he could not.

Retrospection forced itself upon him, despite his most earnest resistance, and despite his wonderful physical strength and splendid mental equilibrium. One repulsed, another came into play. Fate had turned him from the sweet solitude of the valleys and heaths, the tranquil terrains embraced and hushed to repose at the holy tide of eve, into the tumult of a strange land.

He did not regret. He chose and that was all. There was no need for anxiety. But the land he left was so fresh in his memory. The hills, the rocky peaks, the incomparable golden glow of the lofty eminences after the sun had set beneath. The midnight sun or the twenty-four-hour day of the spring. The massive form and features of the country, with its traditions, trolls, spectres and elves, were now as disclosed to him as if they were embodied before him.

He had looked up once when striding through the cleft whirlpool of humanity at the C.P.R. station.

And how fond the reminder!

Her youthful delicacy, the dreamy delight and charm

of her eyes, the rich golden hue of her hair so often stroked by indulgent mother. But, oh! beside her brightness and beauty was a shadow, like the threatening coming of evil. It was her father, so overladen with fatness and disfigured by indulgence, arrogance and abusive luxury.

But his repellent and grim figure vanished altogether and only her's sweet remained.

And while he was pondering and reflecting he concluded that, no matter how wealthy and high-born she might be, he had the right to think of her, to preserve her lovely picture in his memory and to adore her lovely form—yes, her very self, which he hoped was still innocent, and to embrace her with his eyes if he ever would see her again.

Just before the first gleam of dawning, tender-armed slumber enfolded his brain and heart, and he continued to wonder and admire and see and enjoy in the land of picturesque dreams.



## CHAPTER SECOND

## TRAPSON

On one of the many small hills of Crescentwood in Winnipeg and facing the Assiniboine river, was a mansion of solid stone; the walk leading to the portico was of marble. Around it was a charming garden with a number of spouting fountains. It abounded in summer with flowers of rarity and beauty.

It was enclosed by rails of reinforced steel grooved to marble posts.

The house inside was like a palace of a petty king, where water of even temperature was laid in pipes covered with bronze all through the building, while fireplaces in every room served against the nasty chills of autumn and early spring. Private baths and telephones were in connection with the sleeping chambers; spring fountains were everywhere in corridors and rooms with warm or ice-cold water. Floors and walls were of marble, while the frame was of solid steel ramifications. The house was overladen with furniture running into tens of thousands. A Grand New York piano, Victrola and a dozen other instruments helped to make the congestion still more untasty.

The spacious study, which nobody ever occupied, was full to its capacity with books, which nobody read, save what part of them were light romances or infatuating stories.

In this castle lived Stone Trapson. Of course that was not his real name. He was baptized simply Steingrímur Thorvaldson. The fairies of wealth did not haunt his cradle. Poverty and privations were his lot in childhood. It was never known what became of his father, but his destitute mother had to leave him to the care and support of the "hreppur," the Icelandic word for township.

When he was twelve years old or so, he was supposed to be self-supporting. But he was sluggish and averse to labor, hence he had an endless trouble of keeping in any place at all. At last two inconsiderate and obdu-

rate farmers kept him for some length of time, but treated him worse than their dogs, and made him suffer sore want of food and clothing.

Perhaps maltreatment, which always tends to harden and pollute the heart, incited his first impulse to stray into paths of dishonesty. Wherever he stayed one thing or another disappeared and did not return. These petty larcenies went on for some time, culminating in his arrest.

Ten days in the dark county jail taught him enough to give it up. He turned his attention towards the channels of theft where he could steal before the eyes of all, and where the law itself would protect him. He fixed his eyes upon speculations as being the only recourse for the indolent disposition of his nature. He strained his brain in order to disclose a way for a start in one line or the other. But opportunities were few and limited to some capital only. Wanting that, everything became hopelessly impossible.

Then America opened her arms with inspiring promises of wealth, plenty and happiness.

He conversed with one of those great Icelandic procurators sent out by the Canadian Government, so prominently known for eloquence that speaks conviction. That gentleman preached with fervent enthusiasm the evangelium of a Heaven over there.

And upon learning that he had no money, the immigration agent offered to borrow for him half of the price for the ticket of fare, which was much cheaper in those days than now, if he could manage to get the other half somewhere else.

The agent's generosity thrilled him with gratitude. New hopes and really the only ones he had ever dared trustfully to entertain, illuminated his environments and made him almost forget his state of indigence.

His insisting and persisting clamor for migrating made a few of the best-off men in the county appreciate his resolve and join in helping him for the balance of his way. Three weeks' tireless solicitations of his convinced them that it would be expedient to furnish him the money and get rid of him.

He was in his eighteenth year when he left the shores of Iceland.

His arrival in America was like that of many others,

marked with a dark outlook. And for some years his fond dreams of luxuries and ease failed to materialize. Much rather he felt his situation awkward and strainful in the country of his adoption.

There was no Heaven to begin with.

He could not understand or speak English, save the few straggling utterances he picked up on his way across the ocean.

But realizing the practical value of the English language, however, he sought to work and lodge amongst English-speaking people.

For several months after his advent, he worked for a firm in Winnipeg, together with an army of other men, digging sewers and ditches. That work was extremely heavy, soiled with dirt, and despicable seemed to him, and it disagreed with him more than words can tell. Disgusted and disappointed, he removed to a rather isolated Manitoba town. Before he left Winnipeg, he managed with his broken English to secure various agencies, and he further won some patronage from the settlers out there, many of whom were ignorant and abject fugitives from Middle and Eastern Europe. And despite his inborn sloth and antipathy for great exertions, he suffered himself to work during harvest and threshing as a farm helper, as he found it expedient to augment his income.

In this way he succeeded in accumulating the neat sum of eight hundred dollars, which would have sufficed as first payment on a farm. But he fostered no such an idea, for country life was an ill-boding and horror to him.

Like the beams of the eastern star of the old legend, that everybody has been taught to believe, the flash of a big Winnipeg boom reached him.

A sleepless night followed, but at two o'clock he had his belongings on the station platform and both he and they went on the train to Winnipeg.

The Real-Estate-Investment-Fever was steadily mounting. New firms for handling the business sprang into existence daily. The rush was getting madder and madder as everybody wished to be in real estate; buy it, sell it, exchange it, make big profits on it; give up productive work on account of it and obtain life-long fortune, ease and happiness by its fruits of red, red gold.

Thorvaldson—he was not yet Trapson—had to act quickly, and he did. He went to work and bought half a block of land, paying down two hundred dollars, hired an office in an up-to-date Real Estate Business Block, scribbled up a clumsy advertisement for the daily newspapers listing his property there, of course for a double price. He also invited listings of property from other owners.

It was a vortex of events. His lots sold in two weeks for six hundred dollars more than he bought them for. He also brought about sales and exchanges for other people—his so-called clients—that netted him four hundred more.

A thousand dollars made in so as to speak no time, influenced him to invest all his money, stake everything, and in a month he—as the real estate men say it—“cleaned up” ten thousand dollars.

He was unbetrothed. He had kept, or had been kept out of closely interlinked love-matters, with the exception of a few minor adventures.

But now was the time to enjoy marriage in our North American fashion. Two matrimonial opportunities at his disposal were almost a coincidence. But as he was not aware of the latter when he became engaged to the former, and as the latter was in possession of twelve thousand dollars' worth of exceptionally well situated city property, while the former owned money and real property to the amount of ten thousand only, he suffered himself to be engaged to the latter too.

And here was so vast difference that the matter of choice was easy.

The fact that the former had never married, was no more than twenty-four years of age, good-natured, well educated, music-loving, counted, of course, nothing.

That the latter was forty years old, fat, clumsy, bad-tempered, hysterical and so forth, that she was as good looking though, or even more so, despite her age, than the former, and that she was a grass widow, whose divorce had been effected a short time before, mattered nothing.

But the difference, the all-important difference was two thousand dollars, owned by Grace Boulton above the amount of value of the other.

Some of us would perchance place this lady in cate-

gory No. 2. But the truth remained that she was No. 1 in Thorvaldson's category.

And without notifying Miss Svanlaug Sveinsson, his first love, he celebrated his marriage to Grace Boulton. Both were intensely anxious to unite their fortunes.

At that solemn hour he converted his "swain-name" into the widely known Stone Trapson.

Twenty years passed. A daughter, beautiful and charming, was born to him. His fortune had increased until he became, in his own estimation at least, something like a millionaire.

He in company with his wife and daughter had been spectators at the arrival of the immigrants we dealt with in the previous chapter.

And when they came home, they sat down at tea.

"Oh, my, they are dirty swine, them immigrants," commented Mrs. Trapson.

"Yes, dirty swine, abominable, disgusting creatures," was her husband's hearty rejoinder.

Both laughed. Their nineteen-year old daughter looked at them in silence. It did not get into good harmony in her head how her parents did curse those miserable outcasts, who had never tasted of luxury and ease.

"I recollect now one young couple. It was rather a nice set. Did you notice them?"

"Yes, I did. They probably are twins, and they had a fine complexion, clean appearance and were faultlessly dressed, a great contrast to all the rest," she affirmed.

A blush pressed itself here and there out into the girl's delicate, dimpled cheeks. There was also a glow in her sweet blue eyes. But fortunately it was unnoticed.

"What damn thing is this pack coming here for? There are enough thieves and murderers in this land without them." She bulged her eyes and enlarged them as much as she could, as if she were trying to make all the world see and learn how witty and wise she was.

"That is what I say," he corroborated, closing his eyes, as was his wont when he was pondering on something.

"The Dominion Government should never have allowed them to land in this blessed country," her tone imposed, commanding.

"That is my opinion too," he reaffirmed, lighting a big cigar and lying down on a silken sofa for a comfortable smoke, to be perhaps transcended by a subsequent snooze.

But before the consciousness of the daughter the vivacious and virile young man continued in visualization. By no means could she imagine an equal to his elegance and self-evident giant strength. The feelings, the raptures, that awaken in the maiden-heart when touched by the attractivity of a mighty manhood, began involuntarily to make themselves softly felt. But there was an ocean between them, though they were now in the same city, a still more formidable one than that which separated the two countries of their birth. But of these two she did not discern the depth of that million-deep ocean. The superiority and preference she had been taught to consider herself to possess over and above other people save the wealthiest ones, as well as a positive disdain for all poor and struggling people, seemed to her not to include him. His serene picture was so near her spirit as if it were right before her, even leaning on her heart, rhyming the ecstasies in her inexperienced soul.

His earnest, manly and independent appearance, when passing her in the great throng, embodying all the qualities that irresistibly attract the feminine interest, lingered with her in her drowsy, dreamful recallings. He, that moment's delightful reminder, reverberated in fond consonance with her childish vanities, but deeper behind was what later taught her to know about the terrible plight that the money-power has in store for its victims.

## CHAPTER THIRD

## MAGNUS GETS A JOB

Magnus and Helga spent their first week getting acquainted with the city and at the close of it they knew the principal thoroughfares and business centers as well as they did the alphabet.

Through an advertisement in a paper Helga secured work as a domestic with a Scotch family in Fort Rouge, and Magnus got busy examining the want-columns of the big newspapers in order to obtain suitable employment. One morning early he hit upon an ad from Stone Trapson's firm, calling for a junior clerk in the great real estate office. It was also stated that long experience was not absolutely necessary, if applicant could produce evidences of a substantial education in general and good demeanor.

He hurried towards the office.

A city by-election was pending. It was one of those openings into the city council that are well nigh outside of human control. It did not occur because an alderman was recalled. Such an individual never gave up his commission, unless he either died or removed to another part of the continent, or were occupied in amassing hundreds of thousands of dollars through "Big Business."

And in this particular instance, the man in question had succumbed to a still greater aristocrat than he ever was himself, namely that one called death, the cause of death being obesity, which had gradually emaciated the muscular tissues of his heart. The physicians declared it heart failure as a consequence of "extremely hard work."

Magnus had not heard about this election as yet, and the less did he know, that the man he was seeking employment from was about to hurl himself into the maelstrom.

He arrived at the spot before the office was opened, and it gladdened him that no competitors were hovering around.

For some time he gazed motionless at the golden letters ornamenting the door:

The Stone Trapson Co., Ltd.  
Real Estate  
Investments  
Life and Fire Insurance  
Money to Loan, Etc., Etc.

This sumptuous script was engraved in the transparent glass covering the center of the door.

The clerk-in-chief, Robert Dawson, opened the door and grinned slyly at Magnus, whom, he supposed to be an applicant for the advertised vacancy.

Mr. Dawson then pointed to a chair and began to arrange books and documents on the various desks.

"Fine weather this morning," suggested Magnus.

"To be sure, yes, to be sure," was the curt reply.

"Will Mr. Trapson soon be here?" The words came distinctly and slowly.

"Why, I should think so, but he is awfully busy these days," replied Mr. Dawson, looking at him enquiringly. "Not only is business exceedingly brisk, but worry and anxiety over civic duties that my boss is entertaining to handle in the future, if chances be, add to the weight of his work," he supplemented.

"Have any applicants come here for your vacancy?" asked Magnus.

"Not so far as I know, may you be one?"

"Well, yes."

"You are certainly lucky if you get it."

"That makes me the more anxious for it." And his smile was so plain and serene, that Mr. Dawson could not help but smile too.

"Are any Icelanders in this office?" asked Magnus.

"Oh yes, Mr. Trapson himself is an Icelander, and one of our stenographers, Miss Orgford, is Icelandic too."

The dialogue ended. The employees came one after another and Mr. Dawson busied himself giving instructions to one and then to another, and in a space of five minutes every one was at his desk.

Last came the magnate and in his train were half a dozen business men.

Without looking to right or left he walked straight into his private office.



Magnus rose when he saw him coming, but was too late to get any chance to introduce himself.

Magnus sat down again and waited patiently.

When the half a dozen financiers mentioned left, others entered Mr. Trapson's apartment, and so time went on. Magnus found it pass slowly, but he knew that waiting was imperative.

At noon Trapson made his exit from his private office behind four stout, prosperous-looking, richly-dressed men, that he had been conferring with. He was still in a lively talk with them, and when he strode past Magnus who immediately rose, he was undoubtedly all absorbed in their discourse, for he did not look at Magnus, nor make any sign of reply to his eager and winning salute.

Magnus sat down again, but presently stood up turning to whom he thought was Miss Orgford and addressed her in Icelandic.

"Have you any idea when Mr. Trapson will have time to talk to me?"

"Oh, my goodness, how should I know," she answered in English, her expression evincing an evident annoyance. "Why don't you talk English; why don't you speak decently?"

A flickering smile played around his closed lips much to further irritation and resentment of the young girl.

"So English and decency are inseparable," he retorted. "In my country none was ashamed of his mother tongue." He then added ironically: "You are not Icelandic after all, are you? Pardon my mistake and presumption."

"Yes, I am, well no," she snapped utterly confused.

The head clerk, and those who were not gone for dinner, suspended work for a few minutes amusing themselves at the controversy.

She was almost too agitated to will to prolong the discussion. But the fact that he, who had never met her before, knew who she was, startled her so manifestly that she forced herself to add, "How do you know who I am?" The words partly twisted.

"The head clerk informed me that some Miss Orgford worked here, an Iclander. Your type is unmistakably Icelandic, and even your speech betrays you."

"Well, Mr.," she said, tryingly desirous of bringing an end to this fatiguing wrestling of theirs, "you bet-

ter wait until Mr. Trapson is ready to talk to you, or some one else may take your turn," she advised.

And though no rush of applicants was visible (there being none but himself), he concluded to tarry until he could interview the busy boss.

After dinner Mr. Trapson's advent to his office was similar in mode to that of the morning. A platoon or so of bankers, real estate men, manufacturers, etc., were behind or ahead of him.

The afternoon was long to pass. Those who have had to wait hours for a decision in the matter of getting a chance to earn decently bread and butter know what a strain and weariness are its adjuncts.

At five o'clock the office was desolated except the magnate's private one. Half an hour more and then at last, after having ushered out the last squad of those drillers of "City-Election-Warfare," Mr. Trapson looked around and saw Magnus still sitting motionless gazing at him fixedly.

During the day Mr. Trapson had been absent to the world at-large and to everything in his office. All his thought had been centered on securing his nomination as aldermanic candidate, and he wondered why a young man was waiting there after office hours.

He was in excellent humor. And the lofty manner in which he desired to be approached, by those he regarded as inferior to himself in rank and power, was somewhat modified. It was now a faint mimicry of amiability, something not very abundant in his nature. They exchanged "good-afternoons," Magnus not being much impressed with the figure of the capitalist rose but slowly. Trapson walked towards him.

"What can I do for you? Are you looking for a profitable investment?" (Self-interest, shadowing enthusiasm for civic duties).

"No," answered Magnus.

"What are you looking for then? I am very busy, hurry," the smiling features of his face transformed into a slight frown.

"I came here in answer to your ad. I want the job."

"Have you taken a business course or worked in a real estate office?"

"No, I have neither. You stated in your ad. that long experience was not absolutely necessary."

"But you have none and no business education

either, think of that," he retorted assuming an earnest, pondering air. "My business goes by principles," he added.

"Will this not suffice?" asked Magnus independently, handing him his diploma together with references as to his conduct and modes of living. You understand Icelandic."

"So you are an Icclander." To this re-assent Magnus made no criticism.

Trapson glanced at the document. "Will you be compliant, run errands, etc., and make yourself generally useful?"

"Only so long as it is on honest lines I will," Magnus gave him a quick, sharp look.

Trapson's face dimmed somewhat. It was obvious that he regarded Magnus' allusion to crooked ways an effrontery. But that day he was in too good a humor to mind it. And he said rather indifferently:

"Of course we never expect anything such and I can start you in immediately," he added.

"How much do you pay a junior?"

"Twelve dollars a week, a big pay it is too," he responded loftily, "and I will raise it to you—if you make yourself pleasurable."

"All right, I can start tomorrow as you say, can I?"

"Yes, and be sure to be here an hour earlier, than we usually open, as I want you to get busy canvassing and turning information my way."

"I thought I was to begin here in this office."

"Well, the election will be over in no time—in ten days, and I must be elected."

"Why, is there an election campaign coming? I did not know about it."

Trapson was next to stuporized, that the young man had not heard that there was a city by-election.

"How in the world don't you know?" exclaimed Trapson in his husky voice, which resembled creaks of scrap-iron, when he became amazed or incensed.

"I came a week ago from Iceland and I have met but few and have no acquaintances here except a college chum and he is at present away from this city. Consequently I have heard nothing about it."

"Week ago from Iceland?" The ejaculation was stormy.

"Yes, that is true. I came in the Ladell's bunch."

"And a rotten bunch," he exasperated. "But aside from that, you are a marvel, you talk English not only faultlessly but naturally. I would have believed you were English, which of course would be preferable."

Magnus failed to reply. Trapson buttoned his coon-coat leisurely.

They started towards the door.

"You come tomorrow, you'll be sure to . . .," further he got not being interrupted by the door swinging lively open.

"My daughter, my daughter," he shouted, embracing her lightly, "I have been nominated."

The eyes of the youths met. Pure, healthful feelings interflowed, leaving a burning yearning in each other's heart.

## CHAPTER FOURTH

## ELECTION NOTES

Trapson could never have hoped for a candidacy in the ward in which he resided. The clique of financiers to which he affiliated comprised a goodly number of wealthier and more powerful men, a guarantee enough for a permanent impossibility for him to represent the Crescentwood district.

It would have immensely exulted his wife to hear the years of repetitive efforts, he succeeded in persuading the majority of his clique, including the alderman of his own ward, Sir Horace Richmouth, to nominate him for the aldermanic honors in another part of the city.

It would have immensely exalted his wife to hear the great news from his lips that very night. But it had to wait until the light of a new day was born. For so heart-inspired was his jubilation that he found it axiomatic and adequate to have an immediate special drinking-bout performed. And he selected Hall Ladell's spacious and comfortable liquor saloon for the occasion. Mr. Ladell conducted the tending of spirituous in person out of respect to the celebrated personnel, as, with the exception of Three Star whiskey, only the most expensive wines were served, such as champagne, Madeira, promote and the like. And as the night went on the Dominion Immigration Authority's "eye-axle" rotated with a tremendous speed, for he was counting in his mind the many greenbacks he could deposit in the morning. The festivities were decorated with much flowery oratory, both candidate and boosters delivering cajoling speeches to each other respectively. It was a perfect debauch.

And the next day Trapson's bankbook contained all his money, less ten thousand dollars.

Trapson was opposed by Aaron Hoggart, a real estate broker, who two days prior had been chosen to contest the seat, it being in his own ward.

There was no issue at this by-election. Both candidates represented the capitalists, not the people.

Both were leading a luxurious life at the expense of the toiler, the difference being that Trapson had grabbed twice as much as Hoggart, and that very difference decided the contest.

Both nominees were arduous surface-friends (they naturally tried to beat each other out in business). Their amicableness expressed itself by adulating talk, brisk handshakes and frequent invitations and visitations.

When they learned about each other's nomination they hastened to meet to bid each other good luck!

You should think that such felicitations sprang from meekness of their hearts.

Trapson at first confided his success to his own oratorical efficacy, which was in the form of a manuscript of an old campaign speech, kindly loaned him by Sir Horace Richmouth, and which he purported to read at meetings. He also hired a number of well-tried tools of electioneering. His very first meeting was stormy, and its climax was a complete disorder, several laborers making such a noise and uproar as to render speeches inaudible. The tumult commenced at the start, while he was endeavoring with all the pressure of his vocal chords to impart to his audience the fervent loyalty to the people's will that Sir Richmouth's oration contained.

"My ladies and gentlemen, gentlemen and ladies," his hoarse voice echoed. "My earnest desire is to represent you and——"

"Down with him, down with the real estate gambler, the crook, the thief; down with the swindler, down with the oppressor of labor," cried and roared eager voices, the noise of their stamping heels beating like percussive waves of the drum.

But, despite all the commotion, he managed to read half of his address in many broken parts. But repeated efforts failed to go further. His assistant orators were powerless. A few of the most determined laborers rushed for the platform. Trapson fled through the back door, seeking intervention from the police.

Meanwhile a clash took place between laborers and Trapson's lieutenants and a wrangle and row all over the assemblage.

Soon, however, a detachment of constables arrived upon the scene. It thrust itself through the half-

blocked entrance. But at that very moment all lights were switched off. The fist battle ended and the growling, yelling humanity rolled out in a pitched fight of elbows and knees—a grave peril of some being injured or trampled under.

The police, having Trapson's orders to take into custody the rioters, could do but little. Having come too late to witness the brunt of the fighting, and not being able to cope with the outrush and restore order, their flashlights could not aid them in discerning who were the actual disturbers. Yet rather than accomplish nothing they arrested some four that they got hold on, three of whom were Trapson's own supporters.

In the morning Trapson hurried to the Central Police Station to explain matters, and his three advocates, who were incensed beyond measure, and the fourth prisoner, who happened to be a theological student, were all promptly released.

This experience taught him to alter his method of capturing the electorate. Being aware of his double financial strength to that of Hoggart, he decided to buy up the whole clique which had effected the nomination of his opponent.

And upon that decision he ordered his chauffeur to get busy and drive himself amongst his paid-up-to-be friends. And in order to keep that individual in good humor, Trapson made him accept many liberal boons from the case of champagne, that had a pleasure-drive in the candidate's automobile.

He first turned his attention to Eagle Ladell, manufacturer. But he was not present in his office. From there he proceeded to Pilatus Ladell's residence, where he was informed that the two brothers, factory owner and manager, were with the third brother, taking some elixirs in his wine-parlors for cure of dyspepsia and irritable nerves.

But the head of Lawrence Hill, the chauffeur, was getting heavy and drowsy and he did not see very clear; Trapson had also forgotten the directions; so instead of going north they went south, all the way to the Assiniboine River and out into the river, as the bridgehead was broken.

The accident was not unnoticed. Several pedestrians and also occupants of two big automobiles witnessed

the catastrophe. But apparently all of them daunted to hazard their lives for the rescue.

Trapson could not swim, and fumbled despairingly in the slummy water, while Hill, being an expert swimmer, soon got one arm around his shoulder and swam with the other. But being intoxicated, his muscles quickly gave way for the extreme exertion. Presently cramps seized his nerves. His grasp on Trapson's bulky body loosened and both sank.

The awe-stricken beholders uttered piercing cries of terror. A young, stalwart man came running and panting like a fierce, velocious storm. Without a moment's hesitation he plunged into the muddy water and sank too.

It was Magnus.

He had been running errands for Trapson nearby, and while blocks away had eyed the struggle in the merciless river; and he did not know as yet who he was trying to save from a sluggish drowning.

After half a minute or so, all three appeared on the surface, Trapson and his chauffeur about a hundred feet farther down the stream.

With full application of his gigantic strength he swam towards them with an unprecedented rapidity. He got both by the neck under the loop of his arm, and in so to speak no time he was at the bridgehead, moving faster with one arm than most other men using both, to such amazement and admiration of the onlookers as will not be forgotten.

Trapson was dazed and his chauffeur had actually fallen asleep. The weather was warm. The sun shone on Trapson's big whiskey nose and swollen, black face, and when the gentle gaze of the queen of light met his red eyes it was like Christ teasing the Devil.

The owner of one of the automobiles present proffered to convey the amateur sailors home, that they might change dress and rest after the rough treatment of their experience. But Trapson counter-suggested Ladell's saloon as his resort of recuperation, as he desired a drink of Three Star whiskey for bracing himself speedily up, but that particular brand was gone short in his cellar, an order for it, however, pending a delivery from the wholesale house.



His chauffeur, who had awakened by this time, elected that course too.

When Trapson was boarding the automobile he glanced at Magnus, who stared at him fixedly. And then it dawned vaguely upon him that he owed this man his life. "Here are ten dollars for your trouble," said he, holding towards Magnus a banknote of that amount.

"No," answered Magnus emphatically. "I did not do this for pay. My weekly wage is all I expect from you. And as a matter of fact I would have saved the poorest scavenger of this city had he happened to be where you were only a few minutes ago."

"You come to Ladell's and have a drink of champagne on me," expostulated the aldermanic candidate, not minding under the circumstances the effrontery of being told that his life was no more valuable than that of the poorest scavenger in Winnipeg.

"No, I never drink," and the rejection rang in Trapson's ears, despite the all-corruptedness of his body and soul, like a voice of a reprimanding judge.

The river claimed Trapson's expensive automobile and it has rested on its slimy bottom unto this day.

Magnus remained standing, without moving, long after Trapson had vanished, and all the bystanders had dispersed, gazing fixedly, not towards where he travelled, but where she was. The battle of his emotions was fiercer and stronger than his struggle against death, while rescuing the debauchers. The horror, that this beast of a man was her father, caused all his soul to surge from wrath and pain. And the infinite contempt and disdain for him made the contrast to her sweet, dainty loveliness and unprofaned charm suffuse his feelings with pathos, causing his love for her to flame up like the ignition of powder or dynamite explosion. How heart-rending the tragic dramas of hells and heavens on this earth! And yet the gospel ministers were harping on a hell and heaven of some other unknown and unexplored world, that however astronomers had failed to place in the space of the universe. Meanwhile they were contented with their sermons and great friends of prostituted society of capitalists. A blackbird flew twittering past him, almost touching his shoulder. Instantly, as if aroused

from a marring nightmare he turned on his heels straight for Trapson's office.

When the company arrived at Ladell's, the adventurers were duly refreshed and then suffered to have hot and cold baths and change dress. Mr. Ladell lent the chauffeur a plain apparel, while he outfitted Trapson with his Prince Albert frock and derby, the same elegant apparel the Dominion Immigration Authority wore himself when leading the army of forerunners into Winnipeg, of which we read in the commencement of this story.

Trapson then telephoned his tailor and ordered him to bring a suit of clothes for himself and his chauffeur, while he dispatched Hill to purchase a new Cole automobile, the best and biggest in the garage.

And now he began to fish for big things. Both Hall and Ladell's brothers had been drinking there for some time, and especially Eagle, who was officially known as a temperance champion, had partaken of the delicious spirits very generously, and he grunted like a pig, bleated like a ram, neighed like a stallion, bellowed like a bull, mewed like a tom-cat and barked like a dog, as was his wont when he was exceedingly happy.

Trapson suggested that they all three brothers and himself have a round and talk business. And seated comfortably at a table adorned with frothing and foaming intoxicants, the conversation became lively. Trapson naturally introduced the subject to be discussed, and as it turned about election and money, Hall and Ladell's eyes, now the right, now the left, opened and closed briskly. But when the big sums were mentioned, the rotations of his "eye-axle" quickened astonishingly.

And as the business transaction approached its close, it was impossible to determine whether his eyes were open or closed at all, or both, as if in a happy dream, so intense was the motion of his incomparable "mental axle."

Trapson fumbled for his cheque-book, but there was no pocket inside the frock. Then he remembered that it was in his wet clothes, which would be stored away somewhere for the sun to dry them.

"What may you be wanting?" queried Hall, and the "great axle" evinced emotion.

"My cheque-book," answered Trapson with dignity.

"I wanted to have it ready for use. I suppose we come to terms."

"Well, I ho-ho-hope so, for the go-good of our fair city," stammered the wine merchant with heat. The excitement of the moment almost overwhelming his money-hungry mind.

"How much did Hoggart propose to pay?"

Hall exchanged glances with his brothers, and they understood.

"A tousand for h-each of h-us, ha vas te mean ofher, ha," replied Eagle Ladell.

"Yes a mean offer indeed. I volunteer two thousand," thundered Trapson.

"A man of your wealth and power ought to offer more. Five thousand—five thousand, I say, and we will all stay with you with all our support," accentuated Hall.

"But I offer you twice as much. I am only two times richer," protested Trapson gently.

"You are certainly many times his equal in sense and character. The rate-payers of Winnipeg require your priceless services. You must stake something on account of the people, you must win the election, you must." And the "eye-axe" visualized all the earth in its motion.

"Yes, I must be elected," confirmed Trapson with fervor. And the flattery sounded with music-enchantment in his ears. "Bring me cheque forms, I will write out a cheque for five thousand for each of you."

Hall Ladell's feet glided away in company with his "axe." Trapson turned to Eagle: "How many can you guarantee me?"

"Many, ha! Let me see! Sebenty-two tat work in me factory reside in tis ward. How many of me cush-thomers owe me, ha. Yes, roughly speaking, sebenty, six and, and yes ha, eight of me tenants are in har-rears ha, with teir rent ha, about one hundred and sixty altogether ha, an' ye git tem all ha, ebery one ha."

Trapson directed his questionnaire to Pilatus, "How many from you?"

"Well, I am only manager of my brother's factory. But the Moral Reform Association, of which I am a member, holds its monthly meeting tomorrow night. I will try to get and shall get most of those that reside

in this ward, perhaps all of them, besides I shall assist my brothers to have all their men vote right," answered he respectfully.

"Yes ha, me member now ha, te meeting in te Temperance Society ha, of which I have the honor to be president, will take place tonight ha; before your election ha. I can count ha, at least two-thirds of tem sure an sound ha, and tere you hab twenty more ha," supplemented the manufacturer.

"Good," responded Trapson graciously as he began to fill out the cheque forms handed him by Hall. "There will be a goodly number from you I'm sure, Mr. Hall Ladell," he grinned as he extended the big cheques to each capitalist respectively.

"Yes, a hundred sure, no less than one hundred," and the "axle" corroborated this strong statement.

"Did you say hundred?" doubted Trapson in a wild tone. "Then I have perhaps secured my election already."

"You bet your splendid life," chuckled Hall, eagerly. "You will even obtain a larger number from me. I will offer many free 'treats' to certain individuals upon a certain condition. And you will not object to a thousand dollars extra bill—if you are elected."

"Surely not, I must get into the city council now. I am prepared to spend upward of a hundred thousand if need be, but I am going to be elected."

"And you will. Now as to your aspirations. Poor Hoggart has hoped for years, but he cannot afford to spend more than twenty-five thousand he says, so he won't." And the "eye-axle" came to almost a standstill as a special token of the veracity of his remarks.

Trapson remained silent. He was too happy to speak.

The "eye-axle" started again.

"Well, I want you to succeed," said Hall fawningly as they shook hands, and the handshake was warm and long. "And I want to advise you to get hold of John Spears, Toryman Nassy, Allan Albrecht, Edgar Hixins, and those other men of influence that nominated Hoggart, and which I suppose you have all on your precious list. Jim Goldstone you cannot get. He will want to be on the losing side, for he cannot counterbalance against us all. And may luck be with you."

The magnate and his chauffeur quaffed a big goblet

of Three Star whisky, lighted big Grandioza cigars, made appropriate courtesies to all the three important Ladells, and took their leave amidst squalls of felicitating farewells. Boarding the new car with ceremonious ease, the driver, with his precious freight, tornadoed for the next station.

But the ensuing days Mr. Ladell's "eye-axe" revolved at a greater speed than ever — with arrows celerity.

John Spears was not in his office, nor was he at home, so Trapson was obliged to ~~whirl~~ to where the house-factory of the great contractor was situated. Mr. Spears was erecting some twenty dwellings in a cluster for some realty firm. He raged between and around the houses on a bicycle (to economize time), giving orders with thunderous voice, beflowering his speech with vile oaths and profanities.

Trapson admired his way of business. "There is a man of the hour," he thought.

"Use only one nail for each end of a siding board," yelled the boss, passing several carpenters nailing on siding. Then he turned like a prairie fire to the painters on an adjacent house. "Are you mad, you demons? Didn't I tell you that you are to use four times more water and eight times more oil than others do. You won't get a darn cent for your work unless you execute my orders upon the second."

Trapson's respect for this ironmaster rose almost to a point of worship.

The third, fourth, fifth house, and so on were visited and inspected with the same brevity and in the same non-commendable fashion. The masons expended too many bricks for each cubic foot of chimney, the concrete mixers applied too little coarse gravel and water, but too much sand and cement. Likewise the interior finishers and decorators failed to economize material to his satisfaction, and consumed too much time for their important and responsible work. And in short, almost everyone wanted to do his work too honestly for this arbitrary, greedy and corrupt money-grabber to tolerate.

The process of Spears' work-inspection kept Trapson spellbound. Several applauses burst from his lips. And when one employee confided to him that Mr. Spears had used the same roll of tarpaper during all his years as

construction contractor, he became so overwhelmed as to be obliged to pant for breath. Such a man was in Trapson's opinion an ideal symbol of a "real" money-maker.

Spears wheeled to the spot where Trapson and his faithful chauffeur were smoking their Habanas. "Oh, these beasts, these devils are a killing poison," he groaned. "I am worn out to my very heart."

"You administered them as perhaps nobody else could have done. You are a genius."

The "tarpaper economist" was not strongly moved by Trapson cajolery. "If you have some business to transact then come to my office. I am very thirsty and I'm going there anyway," he said independently.

Trapson invited him a fare in his new flyer, and the remarkable trio wheeled off on a lawless speed.

The victims of circumstances, forced at the point of necessity to slave for Spears, were left unmolested by that gentleman for the week-end and the beginning of the next. A bargain with Trapson for a big sum of money, and a carousal with the candidate, was a coincidence.

Trapson came to terms and bought the good offices of Toryman Nassy, Allan Albrecht, Edgar Hizzins and those others that formed the ring of "Big Business" in the ward. And each and every transaction was marked with revelry and dissipation.

Jim Goldstone had taken a counter-evolutionary stand in this respect. And he was the only one that Trapson's gold could not have approached, because he himself had only wanted himself to be nominated, but he had never got along with the other big business men so as to secure their patronage and confidence, and thus he always placed himself on the losing side. A peculiar faculty of a capitalist! And being aware that Trapson had a stronger hold on the campaign machinery than Hoggart, he cast his lot with the latter, but he did not enjoy any bribe, as both candidates failed to seek his patronage.

To make a long story short, Trapson beat Hoggart at the polls. It was, as business men and politicians say, a "clean beat," as Trapson was elected by a plurality of two to one.

## CHAPTER FIFTH

## BEAMS AND MISTS

Philosophizing leads us sometimes into inextricable ambiguities. Philosophy is, at times, merely an enquiry. The life of a truly noble mind is a quest of truth. The shifts and drifts of human age is called fate, but whether fate is partly or entirely within the control of man, or partly or entirely beyond his control, no one has ever known and perhaps never will, yet the mysteries that surround and shroud the fate of man have caused profound minds to ponder, investigate and endeavor to solve, and the result is philosophy—the best we can have, the best we can learn and the best we can believe.

How mystic and wondrous the ways of love! How it weaves concealed webs between two hearts, unnoticeable, invisible, imperceptible, even to the lovers themselves, who sometimes do not know until same are too strong to be rent asunder. How it links together persons even when the big seas sigh and roar between! How it in a blink of an eye ignites scintillations enduring and eternal!

Sometimes love's beginning is but a spark, which later turns to a flame; sometimes is love like the embers half buried in the heart by business and bustle, until feeling and beauty breathe upon it—the omnipotent powers of sex and soul, and make it glow and glare and expand like a forest-fire until one day—maybe after years—it has become an inexhaustible source of warmth and light.

It was in the Winnipeg Temperance Society's dance-hall that love spun its third mesh of heart-spells and soul sorcery for Magnus and Violet.

It was a Thanksgiving festival, in which all the financiers mentioned in this story, and many more, participated.

Stone Trapson's wife was indisposed and demanded that he stay at home, but after a lengthy wrangle as to whether he should go or not, he went.

Violet had left early in the day to join Alma, Aaron Hoggart's daughter. Despite the jealousy of their fathers they were surface friends, you know; they had been chumming together since early childhood.

Magnus Magnusson's only chum was Thorkell Nordland, a college graduate, and whom he had previously known in Reykjavik, and who had immigrated 4 years or so before. He was a lyric and a promising musician. He had already composed a number of melodies, and his rendition at local concerts had invited attention from some of the foremost teachers of violin in Winnipeg. Two great disadvantages threatened to bar every step on his road of ambition, namely, poverty and frail health, and in consequence his temperament was spasmodic. Expectancy and doubt wrought many havocs in his ingenious brain and enticed him to drown his sorrows, imaginary and real, in the silver-clear and golden-red goblets of distilled beverages. His lust, his ungovernable passion for liquor, got gradually more and more away over his best self: Even his loves could counteract it only temporarily.

While a little boy he became infatuated in a girl a few years older. She died before reaching a mature age. In terrible anguish he lamented and cried to the All-Highest to resuscitate and resurrect her from the grave, but the agency he called to his aid declined to do so. Then, as is the case with many others whose prayers are not answered, the germ of doubt about God's mercy, wisdom and goodness began to gnaw his young mind. He wondered why omnipotent, omniscient, omnibeneficent and omni holy God did wound his innocent heart by causing or allowing, which is equally blameworthy, the cruel scythe of death to pierce the bosom of her he loved. He demeaned strangely, it seemed. Day after day he visited the gloomy, lonely cemetery, with more thrills of feeling and profounder grief than ever moves within mind of many an adult. He wept and lamented. He knelt down by the crude little mound as if it were, as it were, the holiest altar his young soul knew. And in sublime, sacred, divine silence he gave vent to the prayer-hallowed fire of his responsive heart—the true harp of love, which music could not echo in the cold grave. "Why did not God hear? Why could He or would He not restore her to



life? Was He not all-mighty after all?" These and many other questions akin were asked by the wonder-child. Many full-grown persons have asked similar questions in all ages and the lips of death have always been sealed.

He did not disclose his feelings to anyone. And none would have comprehended the strains of his nature. His love of Ugfru Jona was too precious, too holy to be divulged, and, as often is the case with children whose brains have sparks of immortal genius, people mistook him for a lunatic. His parents were as ignorant of their only boy as the rest.

Years later, the solemn ceremony of his confirmation took place. His parents were intense orthodox Christians and, bathed in flood of tears, prayed to the Lord to protect their son from sin and evil, he being forced to pledge allegiance to God to the end of his life. The reverend minister uttered the words "justification" and "sanctification" several dozen times and administered the sacrament. But Thorkell was absent from the whole thing altogether; he heard nothing but the voices of his crying soul, and saw nothing but what was the Eden of his heart at that hour—the attractive, rosy, farm-girl Gudrun at Vellir. The yearning for union of youth and beauty embraced all his soul—not cruel, heartless superstition.

He had loved again and he was destined to love often. And events decreed Gudrun to travel by another man's side the journey of life, and he left the district.

While in college his passion for music, which often is allied with that of love, was no longer repressed. In a few weeks he had made such strides on the violin as to amaze the faculty. But he had not been long in Reykjavik before an almost mad affection became engendered for the beautiful Asta, the daughter of the chief justice of the Supreme Court. It culminated in a semi-engagement, which lasted until a short time after he received his diploma of honor from the Latin school. Her disinclination for art (incredible as it may appear) and her levity and vanity and his ever increasing intemperance for liquor, which actuated a partly intervention of her parents, broke it off altogether.

During a spell of utter despondency following he left his native land forever.

In Winnipeg his history repeated itself. Bonds of adoration drew him irresistibly to the merry sixteen-year-old Alma Hoggart, and her reciprocal concern for him was more than indifferent liking.

He had lost faith and belief in God and hated the idea of immortality. Magnus shared these sentiments with him; he also liked music and possessed a fair tenor voice. But what he could play on the piano was merely European comics and American rags.

Through Alma's ardent intermediation both had been entered by the executive committee to take part in the long program. Thorkell received the boon cheerfully, while Magnus conceded reluctantly and merely to please his friend.

The hall was filled to its capacity. A narrow apartment into which was an entry from the platform, the hall and the back lane, and which ordinarily served as a club for big temperance men, had now been transformed into a special kingdom of Wine Merchant Hall Ladell. The walls were lined up with cases of champagne, Madeira, promote, Oporto, Cognac, Three Star whiskey and the like. The table around which advocates of sobriety usually circled served now a foundation for an edifice of cigar boxes heaped up like a church tower.

During the performance of the programme and especially after the luncheon, the wine chamber of the Dominion Immigration Authority was so thronged that one could hardly move. Hall Ladell was very busy, and the ever alert "eye-axle" revolved like air-waves of a cyclone. He was assisted by Buck Slimon, a prize-fighter, and Edwin Fox, a young student. Despite the agility and proficiency of Hall Ladell and his servants as bartenders, many were obliged to wait on themselves, and such men as his brothers Pilatus and Eagle, Edgar Hizzins, Allan Albrecht, John Spears, Toryman Nassy and Stone Trapson preferred it.

Aaron Hoggart opened the program with a lengthy oration. He reminded folks to eat and drink and enjoy themselves. Next was a clergyman, with a short but solemn prayer. In its wake was a choir of young men, fairly soused with bacchanation juices. Then came series of short speeches. John Spears spoke on economy, especially as pertaining to tarpaper and other building materials. Allan Albrecht propounded

his empirical cognition as to the nutritive qualities and salubrity of the meat diet. He counselled people to frequent his retail stores where the world's best smoked mutton, cured ham and dried beef could be obtained. But he did not confine his address to food-stuffs only. Much rather was its latter part devoted and consecrated to a beautifully painted portrait of the home—the home of fidelity and love—the home with a hearth and children. It behooved him to extol the sanctity of matrimony and judge strictly and severely breaches of the marriage pledge, and ergo he condemned and banished with the most expressive utterances at his command, all evil and immoral living, such as adultery, bigamy, and intemperance in all its forms. A number of his “frillur,” who were present at the festival, became visibly moved, but what peculiar ecstasies tingled within them or through them, as a result of the exposition of his oratorical fluence is left to a guess-work to solve.

Toryman Nassy spoke on architectural science, especially as relating to apartment blocks. He expounded the utility of well-built apartments. But he added the absurdity of advising others not to come into the field of competition as that one was already dangerously crowded. •

Edgar Hizzins reminded people of the uncertainty of life, and the subsequent exigency of bulwark against want arising from loss of health or death, as circumstances might be. The bulwark, he advised, was life and accident insurance.

Dr. Med. and Chir. Hlandson and Dr. Med. Bullson, having both just entered politics, spoke on democracies and liberalisms as doctined by their learned friends. Dr. Hlandson, in particular, emphasized the practicability of unionizing all political elements and parties.

Pilatus Ladell, with Hall's derby in hand, told of the wonders the Moral Reform Association were achieving, but he elucidated its ethical standardization in such problematical terms as to render its comprehensibility an unattainable feat. Eagle Ladell spoke about strong and reliable things, that he was known to manufacture. He also pleaded with fervency for temperance and good behavior.

• All these addresses evoked tremendous ovations.

The remainder of the program consisted of several duets, a couple of trios, and then at last appeared Magnus with "something to sing and play," and Nordland with two violin solos.

Magnus seated at the piano without a formal bow and played and sang, "The Song of the Trolls at Play," "The Titans Dance," and "The Berserks Laughed in Death." These old and grotesque airs were received with applause and cheers by the banquet guests.

Nordland saw nothing but Alma while he was playing "Solveig's Song," and Chopin's "Nocturne in E." The long program had wearied the audience, which under Thorkell's soulful music, got impatient beyond measure. Many were eager for the magnificent dishes that were to be served, their stomachs rang with sounds akin to those of a church organ. Many yawns and hawks occurred, and a whisper went up from mouth to mouth that Nordland's playing was dull and dreary. A goodly number argued aloud, that it was a nonsense, a humbug.

The program was at last at an end.

When the big lunch, which followed, was over, Aaron Hoggart, the president of the celebration, announced a dance through the night.

The orchestra was prepared, and like a dam removed from a dike, the big throng of dancers inundated the slippery glazed floor.

Alma had promised Thorkell the first dance and hence she declined several aspirants. Violet had given no such preference. The rush for her was bigger. First was Lairnell Ladell, the son of Pilatus. "Hann lagthi kollhufur," as they say in old Norse, and addressed her with fawning, supple bustle, and with a smile that resembled a crampy frown, "Will yous hono me with the fith danth, madamoshelle?" he lisped.

"Please, excuse me, Mr. Ladell, but thanks for the honor," she answered at random, her eyes strolling towards Magnus and Thorkell, who were slowly approaching in a hushed chat.

"Haf youse promith?" He stopped as Listham, the son of a well-known debaucher trudged clumsily between her and Ladell, and almost grabbing her velvet hand ejaculated, his mouth foaming with liquor odor, "You will not deny me the first dance, Miss Trapson."

"Look for somebody else, quick," her words exer-



tive, her frame shuddering in the presence of this rude, reckless youth.

Listham strode away, puffing his cigar fiercer than ever. Lairnell limped after him.

The replacement was in the stature of Oscar, the son of a meat specialist, Allan Albrecht.

The liquor he had partaken of could be not smelled. Peppermints and strong perfumes got perfectly the upper hand in his display before the girls.

He bowed in obeisance and asked complimentarily, acquiescently: "Will you give me a permission to enquire if I possibly can cherish your preferred dance, Miss Trapson?"

"Well, I am loth to say I cannot comply to your wishes, Mr. Albrecht."

Then one after another these sons of gold followed in the path of defeat until Thorkell and Magnus were there. Thorkell's presentation of Magnus to the female companions stopped the onslaught.

"Miss Alma Hoggart, Mr. Magnus Magnusson—Miss Violet Trapson, Mr. Magnus Magnusson." "Pleased to meet you," exchanged the trio, Violet's voice sounding in Magnus's soul as the most subtle and mellow tone of Massenet's "Meditation."

But the clasp of their hands was still more potent. It embraced all his soul and its earthquaked emotion. And through his incited brow whirled three tiny stanzas that friend Thorkell had composed and made a tune to, and both poem and tune filled the castles of his yearning with swelling, trilling music of the moment, "I saw a moment flying by," etc.

Thorkell showed the way, promenading forth with Alma, his arms firmly around her waist. Meanwhile the other pair saw into each other's eyes in a silent study.

But Magnus was not one of those cowards—those miserable cowards that dread "no" as much or more than death, those helpless, hopeless cowards that fail in pursuits of love and then naturally in everything else.

"Will you dance with me?" he addressed her simply. His voice came to her like a euphonic melody.

Her lips did not open, but tremulous wavelets swept over them, a glitter, a flash like an electric burst dawned in her eyes, faint reddish hues extolled her

dainty, delicate cheeks, and she quivered as she placed her left hand on his commensurate, strong shoulder. He enfolded steadily yet softly and warmly her waist, and the tender touch, the heartfelt convection vibrated through her body with ecstasies unknown and unrivalled before, save in fiction. It was the beams of the best and noblest in human nature. It was the beams of light and fire of love, that shone in their realm of spirit and feeling, as they swung flexibly in the swirling dance in consonance with the noisy, drumming music, which seemed to heave and sink, rise and fall like the breast of the sea. But in an ocean so surging and vociferous, were two unities in unified life-drawn in its preluding stage. The subsequent two dances they danced together. By a tranquil agreement, for only their eyes spoke, he searched for another partner for the fourth, and who do you think he picked up? None but Miss Orgford, that he quarrelled with, as you remember. She was a little nasty and with an artificial frown. But with a close inspection one could have seen two bright billows struggling to break loose in her eyes. But Magnus heeded such not as he hardly knew whom he was dancing with.

And every other or every third dance Magnus and Violet cherished together until dawn. Both were in a dream all through the night—the nightless day of their hearts, the only thing that he felt sorry about, but of course he almost forgot it then, was that his sister could not be there. She did not know the modern dances, and besides she was suffering, mildly though, from La Grippe, a frequent ailment during the severe Canadian winters.

It is true that our young couple did not play on this scene of life quite undetected. The young aristocrats thought it queer, almost ridiculous, but that was all. If any rumors about it had spread the following days, their love-trail would have ended there. But fortunately for them, many of the young men had enough intoxicants in their heads to be unable to think clear, and their deliberations and weighings of the matter strolled into haze, nothingness and oblivion.

At parting their clasped hands and lustring eyes conversed as much as lovers of years would. But all Magnus said, and he said it in a low voice, inaudible to all the others, "Oh, when and where again?"

"Tuesday, three weeks from now, in papa's office, at 5:30."

Three weeks are not long to pass under ordinary circumstances, but for lovers that are not as yet avowed lovers, and less legalized lovers, three weeks are infinitely long. And so it was with Magnus and Violet. Every hour was to them a year, the days were centuries and the weeks eternities. But three weeks come always to an end. The appointed day was busy for Magnus' watch, and the big parlor-clock in Trapson's mansion had received more numerous looks of Violet's serene, blue eyes than any other day before.

Magnus' game was to retard his work in order to have a little of it undone at five o'clock, a feature unlike him. And when that time arrived he pretended to be working at top power of his brain on the calculations before him. The office crew left one by one, the head clerk being the last. He was at a loss to know why Magnus had been so slow that day, and he enquired whether he would like to finish it after office hours or start fresh at it in the morning. To the former suggestion Magnus assented quickly.

Half-suspicious, ironical glance from Mr. Dawson was the last Magnus knew about the restless business world that evening.

It was pretty near six o'clock, Magnus had counted the minutes the last half hour, and then at last she entered gently, her steps light as the soft wind at dusk.

He rose, they clasped hands, eagerly, enjoiningly. "Magnus," "Violet," ran into unison.

"I am sorry I was delayed," she breathed.

"Oh, that does not matter," he hastened to protest.

"And probably our anticipation makes us still more fain to meet."

"Surely!" he affirmed, the tremor of his voice—almost imperceptible as it was—indicating his thrilling joy.

Silence ensued. He meditated on the inevitable, which his forebodings in part revealed, as if a curtain were being lifted, in the clairvoyant flash of few weird moments of musing, from a wild, tragic scene.

Both cartered looks in order to drink nectars of bliss from reciprocal fountains.

"Do you like music?" asked he, so as to say something.

"Yes, I can rather say I do. I practise foxtrots, rags, onesteps, twosteps, threesteps, foursteps, sevensteps, tensteps, waltzes, mazurkas and melodies fitting for other dances. I prefer gay music and in consequence play exclusively that sort on my piano, except occasionally the 'Rosary.'"

"What about books?"

"Well, I like fiction, anything dreamy and agreeable."

"There is a book that one must learn whether he will or not," and his eyes strayed meditatively out through the window upwards into the blue arch of the sky.

"What book can that be?" Her interrogation a relentless obtestation.

"The book of life."

"What!" The expectancy was like that of a dramatic intermezzo in her heart, so unshadowed, unembittered and uncareworn.

"This office has never been winsome except now," commented he after a brief interim.

She was all-absorbed in the happiness of his presence.

"Violet, oh, Violet!" And his dearest name filled the utterance with commingling of sadness and loveful emotion. "Our affair is a weird-like copre destination from the aspect of it, preciously interlaced with happy concurrences. I pray that you may understand."

Her blue eyes intook this elegant, manly man, so beautifully virile—the ideal of women. But she heard only an odd word of his advertence to struggling fate of hope and love.

The glass of hours had emptied with swiftness that seemed to them but a fraction of a moment's stay together. The darkness of the moonless, encoming evening deepened, and the all-tranquil hush reigning around them wrapped their heart like harmonious, unspoken voices.

Far into the night they shared each other's presence, leaving trouble for its turn. The puissance of feminine fineness, subtlety and daintiness, and the powerful virility of a man in his prime of resolute ambition, intermingled and interacted in shaping affection: that lusted in the gloom of tribulations and lived and throve under incumbence of snow and ice of martyred hopes.



And they parted without Violet being able to understand Magnus' allusions to unavoidable interference of greed, egotism and ignorance.

Little did she dream that they were but playthings of caste and criminal reaction of law-sanctioned society.

But to his spirit, so pregnant with doubt, not of her love, but of her love's fulfilments, his happy moments with Violet had been blissful beams, while the source that effulged them was half-buried behind life's sombre mists.

## CHAPTER SIXTH

## HOW HOGGART JUDGED THORKELL

Thorkell Nordland's position in this land of plenty was awkward and unhappy. For a time he was attached to a party of surveyors in the wilds of Northern Manitoba. Then he tried his luck around camp-fires. But the rough company of bushmen, miners and fishermen was at a decided variance with his delicate, gentle nature. A vocation as an assistant librarian was vacant. There were many candidates for it. And Thorkell was one of them. His certificate from the University of Reykjavik carried such weight with the directors that he was appointed for the position. But his employment there came to an abrupt end. Numerous complaints brought about his dismissal. Yet it was unexpected to him. He did not see that it mattered seriously that he sometimes arrived fifteen minutes or half an hour later than stipulated, and left a few minutes before the number of working hours had matured.

His next turn of luck was by one of the leading moving picture theatres. But salaries were meagre. And his failure to appreciate jazz music, ragtime and the like, disqualified him for a long term. And, in fact, he left within a week. He was then offered a position to play evenings in Freuline Dalhoff's cafe. The atmosphere there, which reeked with disagreeableness, and the bad repute and dishevelment of the place, combined to make him give it up in its inception.

A musical festival was about to take place. He chanced to be an eleventh hour addition to the already "big-named" list of entertainers. His rendition of masterpieces of Liszt, Schubert and Chopin astounded Prof. Ralph McFrazer, the greatest authority on music in Western Canada. Thorkell also played then, for the first time before the public, a composition of his own, entitled "Morning of Love." Likewise Prof. McFrazer observed the striking originality in Thorkell's brain-made number. The Winnipeg dailies contained, the subsequent evening, long columns of praise about Thor-

kell Nordland. Prof. McFrazier termed him as a great rising star of the world's greatest art. He congratulated the people of Winnipeg for the fortune of enjoying an artist of such original powers. But the argument of the great critic did not open eyes and hearts and minds of the people to see and feel and understand that there was a great genius in their midst.

It has been stated that Aaron Hoggart aspired for the mayoralty and other positions of honor. But when it came to the fine thing, his ambition for politics was nothing compared to his lust for accumulating money. His daughter's and Thorkell's love-affair was as unknown to him as a passage in the Bible, the truth of which he claimed to believe, although he had never heard one word from it. He did not care a rap about art. But he wanted help in his real estate office. And knowing that Thorkell was out of employ, offered him the job. Had he proffered to assist the artist in obtaining more substantial knowledge in acoustics, he would have preferred such a proposition to Hoggart's real estate business. But "self-made" men so-called, like Aaron Hoggart, that is to say, those that begin gambling speculations with nothing but a shrewd business-head, consider business the only thing worth while. However, as Thorkell was to board in Hoggart's own house, and sit beside Alma at the table, he accepted.

But he turned a failure. His canvassing, collections and book-keeping did not satisfy Hoggart. And no wonder! On his canvassing expeditions he forgot time and place, sinking his mind in repertoire of grand operas, or sweet dreams of his own debut as a master or virtuoso in New York, London, Berlin or Paris. Evening caught him often with but little done. And his employer's brow was darkly wrinkled the next morning. But he did not say much. Likewise it sounded kind of queer to people, whom Thorkell was to collect due payments from, when he requested them to pay in favor of Mr. Hoggart fifty dollars of the principal in E major and interest amounting to twenty-six dollars in B flat, and so forth. Hoggart got quite disconcerted, nervous as he always was, when he learned that his bookkeeper had desecrated the accounts of his ledger with notes of the melodies he was making. Parts of and even whole ballads, oratorios, as well as serenades and waltzes, etc.,

had been written between lines and wound around numbers representing big sums of Hoggart's almighty profits.

Although greedy for gain, Hoggart was what could be termed a rather good fellow. He took a sort of liking to Thorkell in the start. The peculiar and expressive features of his face; the full, serene, blue eyes; the poetically shaped nose; the big red lips; the curly black hair and rose-dotted cheeks, had, as was the case with many others, attracted Hoggart's attention. And he entertained a kind of compassion for him. He saw that Thorkell lacked so much in practicability, that he required an enormous training in order to make good. But he was determined to make a business-man out of Thorkell. There was nothing to be thought of else. Music was a fad, a humbug, a nonsense unless one had money to go through costly academies. And Thorkell had no money. And since, of course, he must learn business for a livelihood, real estate was as good as any, Hoggart held, and vastly more so, as he knew no other occupation to be so profitable. And he did his best to inculcate in Thorkell enthusiasm for business and the necessity for making money. He drew up bright pictures of power, esteem and fortune of those that command the real estate and banking exchange. But the only effect that Hoggart's persuasion made was that Thorkell tried his best to imbibe it all.

But, alas! it was impossible of achievement. For two years Thorkell stuck to Hoggart, or, rather, Hoggart kept Thorkell, in order to get business one way or the other into his head. But at the expiration of said period Hoggart, utterly disappointed and dejected over his failure as a business teacher and over Thorkell's incomparable stupidity, handed the musician his passport with the words, "I am through with you," which meant that Thorkell was not to expect any favor or any guidance from the real estate magnate any more.

Hoggart, however, philosophized on Thorkell, which he did in very few cases, as philosophy was not in his line of business. He realized, too but very vaguely, that Thorkell's strong inclination for music did tend to mind-wander, and did tempt his thoughts to stray away from the only necessity of life—business. But he concluded that if Thorkell be mentally balanced, he could surely

have learned and understood business during two busy years. But failing to do so, he must be weak-minded. And when Thorkell asked him to get his wealthy friends together and assist him to take up the study of music in Toronto, Chicago or New York, he told the musician straight out that it would be no use, as he was evidently weak-minded or else he could have learned the real estate business.

So that was his opinion of Thorkell. Poor Aaron Hoggart! Miserable slave of wealth and ignorance! Weak-minded! What a woeful upside down of truth and reality! Martyrdom! The capitalist judged Thorkell weak-minded because the artist's great brain was undivided, so as to be able to perform magnanimity of musical charm, that was destined to become the wonder for the world.

It approaches a veritable miracle that during all the length of time Thorkell had been wooing Alma, and she had accepted his love the while, nothing had so far been said about it. No story-heralds or gossip-carriers or, as it is termed by old Norse, "kjaftakindur," had spread as much as a rumor of a poor, unpractical dreamer living for years in love with an only heiress of a successful business-man, the possessor of half a million almighty dollars. To be sure, Thorkell's love-making was as anomalous as everything else about his personality. He never asked Alma to marry him. He never even hinted at matrimony. And yet his love was truly fit for the covenant of faith and purity of the holiest of pledges—the home. But his love all-absorbed him. Her embrace enclosed his gratification. Her kisses sealed his words. And yet he felt something wanting. And the more so the more they were together. And surely something was lacking.

His music charmed her. But she could not estimate it, not measure it, not appreciate it in the light of true understanding. She saw him as a child views a gilded cloud, praising its reddish glow and splendor without knowing that it is so, because the sun shines upon it from somewhere behind. And he did not realize it then, as he did so well afterwards, that there was never in her the quality that could substantiate the thermal affiliation of his spirit. Both were blindly in love. And the love of both was equally blind. The love of both

was strong, although hers was stronger. A tactical, unworded avoidance of an enamored behavior in their folks' presence, arising from subconscious self-assertion of their natures, accounted for the silence of people, that were not too reticent when suspicion about caste-inhibited love, a thing that wealthy parents involved oftentimes regarded as scandal.

Of course, all love-secrets open to divulgence in time fixed by fate. And Thorkell's and Alma's love-affair proved to be no exception. Only their "time of grace" was much longer than usually is the case. Hence, its climax.

But meanwhile Aaron Hoggart stuck to his fixed idea as to Thorkell having a weak mind. The friends of the capitalist and many others joined in the chorus. Just think of it! A man was held weak-minded who had in himself the exquisite talent that pronounced Ole Bull and Paganini the master violinists of their day! A man was treated as weak-minded in whose soul flashed the genius that made Liszt, Chopin, Schubert, Mozart, Beethoven and others of the greatest immortals!

How society needs an infallible perspective, by aid of which the soul of the martyr may be seen! How long is the man of genius to be a mark for the brutal farce of misunderstanding and prejudice? How soon will the world be compelled to discard vanity and preserve the ideal, and prefer a great mind to a gilded piece of merchandise?

## CHAPTER SEVENTH

## HEAVEN OF THE HEART

She took down the receiver. "Hallo! Oh! is that you, Magnus? I—I am— Yes, it is Violet speaking. I—I am so—so—glad. If they are home? No, no, they went to church. As to their being absent all evening. Why, yes, I ho—hope—I think so. They said when they left that they would call at Hoggart's—Why I did not go with them?—Why, well, of course, I felt kind of indisposed, you know. If I am alone—oh, sure, sure—You would like to come. Ah! did you really say you would?—Oh, good—Heaven be praised!—Are you, oh, are you coming?—Good! splendid! lovely!—Come, yes, come, come!" She hung up the receiver.

She strolled toward the chamber where the piano and the other musical instruments of the household were. She seated herself at the massive piano and touched at random the first chords of the "Rosary," the celestial masterpiece of Nevin. Its echo in the lofty marble walls was dolorous and melancholy, yet so solacing, solemnizing, sanctifying and elevating. The tune, without words, invokes the most responsive as well as the deepest entombed raptures of the human spirit.

The gentle fingers continued to glide over the notes of the exquisite instrument playing the divine melody, and the tender harmonies swept over her senses like the breathing air at autumn-tide. It resounded the spring that was and the spring that will come again. It talked in living terms about the rainbow—the resplendent tears "when love kisses the lips of death"; the eternal home that burns, that splendorizes itself at the portals of the tomb; the visions from the unknown, unexplored shore, and the fullness of affection and devotion of true, patient hearts.

A tender strain pressed softly into her ear. Instantly her playing ceased. She hearkened. And surely, surely he was coming.

Her heart beat violently. Her swan-like bosom

heaved from sweet anticipation. Deep flush crimsoned her cheeks, crowning them with wreaths of her pure blood. Magnus was her first love and—

She did not finish her meditation, for the vibrations of her lover's humming serenade were so very near. She turned and glanced towards the door, which opened noiselessly.

Magnus was at her side.

Lengthy interchanges of enjoyment of their eyes and the soft clasp of their warm hands, electrified by the fervor of their hearts, confirmed the joyfulness of their mutual welcome.

"I hurried all I could," said Magnus.

"I am glad you did," she replied.

By a motion of hers they pattered leisurely to the private parlor. She pointed to an armchair. And as they seated, she remarked, "Isn't this a beautiful home?"

Everything but Violet had escaped his attention. And his quick glance at the finery and pomp of the apartment met his mind in half-way repulsion and reprobation. Presently, however, he said pleasantly, "Yes, its appearance is lovely to the eye."

"I wish to live with him I love in a house like this."

"Maybe you will, and then again, maybe you will not."

"You speak under some cover of mystery," she criticized, but her eyes spoke a boundless adoration.

"I take things seriously. And I am glad I do. I do not deviate from one thing today to another tomorrow. I know what I want. And I get it if I can. And I am prepared to fight for it if necessary—if it be not below my pride—a pride born in me." His melancholy voice indicated deep-rooted devotion.

"I must say I can't grasp your meaning." The vexation in her words like a child's complaint.

"I know you can not now."

"Where trust and love converge," and she was glad she could say it so well, "where trust and love converge," she repeated, "there is rejoicing, mutual rejoicing."

"Yes, with courage and perseverance too," he contri-



buted. The ardent expectation caused sparkles from his vision to blend with those of the blue fountains of her eyes.

He moved his chair closer to hers, slowly. He took her hand in his. Her face beamed overwhelming joy, her heart beat with intense emotion.

"Do you love me, will you be my wife?" Never had he spoken with such tenderness, infinite tenderness.

She flung herself to his heart. "I love you, I love you always," he said, as the sweet, sweet, holy kisses, one, one, and then one after another burned on their thirsty lips. "I love you, oh! I love you," she sighed, enfolding his neck, while her eyes, the blue seas of love, filled with silvery pearls, her tears, tears of bliss, pure and innocent, and with streams of ecstasies all through her body, that only a young girl in early bloom can enjoy from her first love.

Half an hour passed. And then they had quenched the sorest thirst and quelled in part the hunger of their hearts. Violet sat on his knees, still like a timid child, his arms around her waist.

"Violet," his voice resembled the din of a distant gale. "Between you and me, between your love and mine, between your happiness and mine is a barrier which may prove insurmountable, between us a million dollars, an impediment more formidable than concrete ramparts reinforced with iron and steel."

She said nothing in a form of confirmation, nor was there an abortive cognizance of so much as abstruseness of pending matters as he half expected and longed that she would express. All that she did was to snuggle more firmly to his breast, like a frightened bird that has fled to its nest.

"I possess no money; I am as they say in this country 'dead poor,' and your father is a millionaire." He stopped, patiently waiting for her to say something, but she did not.

"But youth, strength, will and ambition is mine, dear, dear Violet!" The sentence was like a suppressed wail with undercurrents of the surfs of the deep.

She embraced his neck and kissed him, but fitting words she could not find, and perforce chose to be silent.

"Violet," he said, much louder than before—it was

almost a cry—"unfortunately for both of us you seem not to have very keen forebodings of an impending battle. It may be fought tonight or it may be fought later." He took both her hands and pressed a long, indulgent kiss on her budding lips.

"If you have to fight a battle, I'll try to help you; I'd like to be a heroine," and her eyes beamed with love.

"There are beauties, like perfuming flowerets of the pole zone, that fade in one frosty night."

"That may be," she sighed.

"And you are delicately and softly built. It is hardly to be expected that you can successfully encounter the rough and the cruel, but maybe you can."

She kissed and pressed to his heart, eager as an indulgent child.

"Would you leave this pompous, luxurious home forever and follow me out into the cold, the dark and the uncertain, facing at least temporary want of comforts that you have so affluently enjoyed?" And every word was an attestation of conscious right and importunity.

"If necessary, I will hope I shall," salt tears rolling down her cheeks, wetting her hands, so hot and abiding.

"It pains me to the depth of my heart that my words at the hour of our betrothal are so oppressive, but it is on account of an ominous presentiment, not pertaining to your love, but to the attitude of your father and mother." His voice quivered like a strong oak in a wild storm. "But we will efface it from our consciousness during these fast fleeting moments of felicity," he added in forced calm.

Endearments inscribed ecstasies of ever-enduring fidelity.

"Shall we sing and play 'Heaven of the Heart,'" he proposed.

"Yes, I delight in that notion," she responded as they both stood up and walked slowly towards the den.

"But you do not know the tune nor the words," he imbibed the anticipation of her role.

"I will try to play the accompaniment," she answered self-reliantly, as she seated herself at the piano.

Then he began to sing the "Heaven of the Heart," which words and music his friend Thorkell Nordland had composed and taught him:

Heaven of the heart,  
Oh, never from me part!  
I kneel in holy adoration  
Before thy blessed throne;  
My life would be a desolation  
If you were not my own,  
My own, my own, my love.

Heaven of the heart,  
Oh, never, never part!  
Thou hast my pleasure's holy vision,  
My Eden ever known;  
Thy harps consound in sweet unison,  
For thou art all my own,  
My own, my own, my love.

Heaven of the heart,  
I pray do not depart!  
In thee I find the incarnation,  
Not aim and work has shown;  
My life shall be a consecration  
To thee, who are my own,  
My own, my own, my love!

The commingling of voice and instrument was truly love's sweet song.

They sang and played several favorites besides, and time had spent itself, unnoticed and unobserved by them.

They went back to the parlor, chanting love's vows of steadfastness, trust and devotion. He seated himself in the finest of easy-chairs, took her in his embrace; she rested her head with his heart, enfolded his shoulders, and there they reposed in love's fullness of bliss and felicity.

## CHAPTER EIGHTH

## LOVE AND PRIDE

Mr. and Mrs. Trapson entered the parlor. Violet and Magnus were in a soft, sweet embrace, utterly unaware of an immediate intervention.

Trapson's panic and consternation was above description. His big whisky-nose seemed to be about to blow away. The veins of his forehead swelled extremely, his liquor-stained countenance was odiously dark. In a fury and wrath, that knew no limit, he sprang like a tiger at its prey and tore Violet from her lover's heart with a force that he was never known to possess before or after.

She fell on the floor. Her mother bent over her, lifted her up and pressed her with almost choking greed to her breast, deformed by obesity, heaving and sinking from a crazed excitement as she hissed and yelled, "Oh! my child, my dear child, how terribly awful, my dear, sweet, sweet, only child!"

Trapson took a second bound at Magnus, who still sat as if nailed to the chair. His face was pale and in his eyes were flashes bright and quick as bolts of lightnings. The old magnate, crazed as he was, halted before Magnus' piercing cast of countenance.

"You darn scoundrel! villain!" he panted, his arm outstretched threateningly a few inches from Magnus' face.

He was compelled to slow down his reviles on account of his flesh. Then, after a brief interval of rest, he thundered forth: "You crafty, false Satan! You have allured and beguiled my innocent child. You have hell itself working in you, you have, have—" His unfinished profanities turned into a groan, akin to that of a steer harnessed for the first time.

Magnus rose rather abruptly. Trapson recoiled instantly and put one hand to his heart to ensure the continuity of its function.

"It is a lie!" Magnus' voice was hard and piercing.

And his words seemed to cut right through Trapson, who became fiercer and madder than ever.

"You dare say it is a lie, you dare to contradict me? You rogue! You have crept into my own house in order to entice, by your treachery, my own, pure, lovely daughter. You dirty beast, thug! To hell with you! To hell—" Here he lost completely the little reason that ever was in him, and, maniac-like, with frothing and foaming mouth, with his eyes bloodshot, and every feature distorted, he hit, with the golden knob of his big cane, the back of Magnus's right hand, bursting two veins and causing the blood to gush out and onto the floor.

Violet, trembling and sobbing in her mother's lap, looked up towards Magnus. "Oh, Magnus!" she cried, in overwhelming fear.

"Violet, don't fear; my hand bleeds, but my heart bleeds more. I won't use physical force against your father."

"Oh, my! you are ungrateful and wilful, Magnus," yelled Mrs. Trapson, like a hurt pup-dog. She thought it expedient to take the turn when her husband was obliged to leave it to her, his passion having exhausted his breath. And he slammed himself into a chair, braying and gnashing his teeth and cursing everything under and above and on earth.

"My man gave you a chance," she continued with a rebuking zeal. "Yes, poor, greasy immigrant as you were and are, he did it, and you recompensed by sneaking into the society of our child, our daughter. Oh, my! you are dirty, hideous, abominable!" Her accusations ended in a scream, howling, hissing groan.

Trapson had by this time retrieved his former vehemence. "Get away, you devil, you peace-disturber of my family," he groaned. "Get out of my house! Don't you hear? Wretch, get out of my house!" some of his words smothering in his husky, fat-swollen throat.

"I go when I want to go," was Magnus' curt reply, as he stood defiantly face to face with the three of them.

"Unless you leave immediate I'll phone the police," said Trapson, as he started off towards the telephone.

"Don't do that, dear, for heaven's sake, for my sake and our daughter's sake and for your sake, don't do it. It is enough shame and sorrow without calling the police

and having it entered on their records," shouted Mrs. Trapson at top-voice.

"Will that be?" he grunted, turning from the telephone towards her; "will they record an arrest of such an immigration outcast, such a transgressor of civility and decency?" he asked.

"Why, yes, my own dear man," she lamented, stroking the tresses of her daughter's golden hair. "If you have him arrested now, we will have to appear before the Criminal Court tomorrow morning and answer to the charge, and that will amount to the same as placarding it all over the city. The papers will have columns about it and that would render our restoration from this terrible experience an impossibility." Her argument causing him to chafe the floor in irresolution and to fling his arms around him as if to drive the air out of the chamber. "And you know this as well as I do," she supplemented.

"I s'pose you are—are right," he snapped, half stuttering.

"But when will we get rid of this awful intruder?" he asked.

"My goodness, I don't know," she wailed, caressing her daughter still harder and wilder, "but I suppose we will have to wait until he finds it to his advantage to go."

"You are right, Mrs. Trapson," said Magnus, as he stood gazing incessantly at Violet, who sobbed and lamented and now and then turned her tear-stained eyes on Magnus, who drank in her fine looks more eagerly and passionately than he would have any other nectars of bliss.

"He has beguiled our daughter," cried Mrs. Trapson.

"Why, of course he has," corroborated her husband with emphasis.

"It is hardly possible that she is such a fool as to think anything about a dead-poor immigrant, not worth a cent?"

"Not worth a cent," she repeated.

"And is not and never will be fit for our society."

"No more than a dog," said Mrs. Trapson, as she glanced at the picture of Christ that adorned the wall opposite, as if He had been dominative and discriminative.

Magnus' eyes entreated Violet in heartfelt prayers.

"Violet," and through her mists of wails it sounded in her ears like a welcome of the portals of heaven; "Violet," he repeated, his voice with tremulous grief, like a funeral chorus; "Violet," he said the sweetest of words, the queen of all the world's names for the third time, as an all-important introductory to an oration, pregnant with beautiful eloquence that only force of pure feelings and of true love could have inspired, "how soon was our affairs to be tested, how soon was it to be proven, whether our vows were to be enduring or whether they would fade away like twilight illusions; whether our ecstasies were profound, holy, eternal or limited to excitement of moments. Oh! how soon, oh! how soon was it to be decided, whether our love deserves its name or not; whether it was founded on courage, devotion, dedication and willingness to sacrifice, even pleasures, for its sake; whether it was a fickle sensation only eager to shake the sweet sunshine but which swayed in the tempests and wild blizzards of life overpowered by fear, resigning its fate to death. How soon, oh! how soon came my premonitions to pass with my future's infinite cold, from loneliness and oneness!"

His desperate ordeal had put all his soul on fire.

Trapson prayed to God that this scandal might soon be a thing of the past. Violet wept and trembled like a leaf in her mother's greedily caressing arms.

"How abhorrent is the power that holds us now apart—the monster of egotism and ignorance!" Magnus' voice was keen-edged, piercing, pounding.

Magnus took Violet's hand. "Violet, dear Violet! An hour ago you promised me beautiful things, you promised to love me to the end of your life, to trust that I could build you a future happiness, to devote your life to a home of your own and to dedicate the best there is in you to our union." He stopped. His implorations had the genuineness of divine worship, as if she had been his angel, his Saviour, his God.

"Violet, oh! Violet," he continued, "show me that you love me as you did an hour ago."

"Oh, Magnus, why do you doubt that I love you?" she cried in deadly despair. Her mother closed her lips and whined, "Oh my! you are out of your mind, my child!"

Violet's love-confession imbued Magnus with lofty

poetical terms. "I lived with you in the spring of love, I drank from its fountains the sweetest waters of life, glowed in the sunshine of embrative raptures, but winter burst upon me, all of a sudden I was alone on a desert, victory had turned to defeat."

He knelt down.

"Violet, I pray, follow me out into the cold, the dark, and the uncertain. I will protect you and consecrate all my life to our love." His voice died out. This stalwart man trembled like a straw.

Violet managed to free her lips from her mother's clasped palm, but her answer died in sobs.

"You are my first love and you shall be my last love." His utterance resembled a subdued wail.

He opened his arms. "Come!" he cried; "come with me, oh, come with me!"

Mrs. Trapson pressed her daughter with all her might to her heart, while Violet endeavored to relax the fetters of her mother's selfish love. Her eyes were like red fires in a sea of tears, as they met once more those of Magnus. "I am so afraid, I can't help it, but oh, dear Magnus, I—I—"

She could say no more; all her body shook; the intensity of her agony was above words.

But unfortunately Magnus was blind to her condition; he saw and understood nothing but that his sweetheart was a plaything of hideous caste.

"Good-bye, Violet!" His words rang like funeral bells. "Perhaps we will never meet again. And then again, the time may come when you kneel down before me with open arms, asking me to accept your cowardly love, and then—will I be ready?"

He turned to the door like a flash, the heavy front door closed between the light of his life and the cold, dark and heartless world.

At this juncture a wave of courage stirred Violet to action. She tore herself loose from her mother's arms, rushed to the door and peered out into the dark, but he had vanished—vanished.

She faltered, turned and fell headlong on the marble floor with an awful, piercing cry: "You have killed us both!"



## CHAPTER NINTH

## DESOLATION

Magnus trended for his place of lodgment. He flew more than walked. He took the stairs of his room on the second flat in two steps. He threw himself in his overcoat on to his bed. And then he began to collect his thoughts. He had never been excited or restless before. Why was he dispirited or disconsolate now? To be sure, the sweetest, best and the holiest on earth was denied him, but he was strong—therefore he must bear it—bear it like a man.

Had not many of the best and noblest men been deprived of the heaven of their spiritual hopes? Were not many excellent poets, authors, musical composers, scientists, humanitarians and philanthropists denied fulfilment of their cravings of heart? Yet they struggled on for duty's sake. Had he not some duties to pay to humanity? And was not the deplorable state of mankind an incentive enough to provoke in the mind of a dutiful, strong man the noblest sympathies there exist, and the broadest, deepest and highest love of the soul? What about his gifts from nature? His own self? His powerful, healthy body and his balanced mind? Was he not to love, to live, in order to devote all his possible usefulness in the interest of other men and to the betterment of the world? Was not Christ and a number of other benefactors of mankind alone? And as they loved other men—all men, as much, or more than themselves, is there any doubt that they loved a woman, a child and the home? Fate did not grant them what they probably yearned most to cherish. And thus they were compelled to live without the softest, sweetest craving of their hearts. Their minds prevailed over their hearts.

How could he make will, the puissant valet of his stable reason, also overcome his heart? Incessancy of generous activities brought about the invincibility of aim of the truly greatest of men. And that is why work—and nothing but work—could in time, if not

soon, quench the fire of love, that was beyond his allotment to cherish. Yes, he was going to work honestly, trustfully and fully, and to avoid doing injustice to anybody. But he had been uncondonably maltreated. A cruel offence had been perpetrated against him. Was he not to avenge for that? Did not love have a right superior to the shallowness of his sweetheart's uneducated parents? In the light of his reason, there could not be any doubt as to the gravity of the unrectitude and tyranny to which he had been compelled to submit. But days of reckoning and judgment would wait their turn. Meanwhile he must secure work in a law office, as he had qualifications for an entry into the faculty. He had not got his pay for the last two weeks. To damnation with it! He was not going to step into Trapson's office for it. It could go. Let it go! He had enough money to tide him over a short period of inactivity, or until he had established himself in pursuit of the study of law.

He thought about his intimate friend Thorkell Nordland. He would have the same wreck out of his love-adventure with Alma Hoggart. The father, the haughty aristocrat, would most likely spurn the musician away from his daughter. There was no power in the world that could intercede so as to prevent his friend from becoming a victim of the same cruel destiny which he himself was subject to, even though he was a highly promising violinist and a composer of music, and more—a genius. What did these money-tyrants understand about art? It was to throw pearls before a flock of swine. Would it not be desirable now to have a colloquy with Thorkell, and to hearken to the sentimental strains of his violin at this most desperate juncture of his own life? Surely! But, on the other hand, it would be the most manly to be alone as he was, and to ponder on and plan a lifelong, independent future.

He discovered now that he still wore all his winter apparel, and that no light was burning. He rose, turned on the switches, and began to undress slowly. His bed was warm and the chamber was well heated up, but nevertheless he could not force his brain to rest. He tried to terminate all thinking, which almost never failed to hush him asleep. But the channels of his

painstaking recollections refused to be closed. And Violet appeared more beautiful and charming than ever. He recalled her looks, her smiles, her endearments. He felt her sweet kisses on his lips, her soft hand in his. But it was only momentarily. Then all was dark reality again. He became furious, almost mad. Why did she not leave him alone? Why was she penetrating the veil of non-reflective oblivion that he wished to place between the present hours and those of the nearest past? But despite all his efforts, she persisted in his memory. He saw her tear-stained face, her eyes so infinitely blue with a red tinge from weeping. He saw her body, convulsive from awe, and heard her lament, "Oh! Magnus, why do you doubt that I love you?"

It never occurred to him that her failure to "follow him out into the dark, the cold and the uncertain" was for dearth of strength. And as he lay awake hour after hour, he condemned her for being a coward, a hysterical weakling, and declared loud and otherwise that she were altogether unfit for a strong and steady man.

But he was lonely. He was awfully, awfully lonesome. The monotony of the night dug itself into the depths of his heart. And how cruel was life! How infamous the rules of caste! Trapson had really never worked for a cent of what he counted his own. And yet he had the power to destroy an honest man's joy!

God! Was not He supposed to gaze with an observant eye on the agony and to hearken with an attentive ear to the groans of those that suffer injustice at the hands of the tyrants? And did He interfere? Never!

"And He makes rich and poor."

Fine ethics! Noble religion!

Surely man must fight for his rights, or be trodden under in this horrible stampede for dollars and cents.

But, oh! Violet came again and again. Was she still thinking about him? Was she still weeping and sobbing? Did she really love him? Yes, she did. There was no doubt. And yet he decided to try for all his might of volition to forget her, and live without her love, without all women's love!

And on went the night, slowly, tryingly, awfully. But on it went.

The first gleam of dawning painted a wonder-color on

the window-pane. Gradually it widened and brightened until all the room was bright with day. In time the sun shone through the frosty roses.

And still Magnus lay awake in his bed.

When he was dressing, the world was to him, for the first time, a desolation. There was a night of desolation in his heart. Life itself was a desolation. But he was going to win a victory over himself!

## CHAPTER TENTH

## VARIOUS EXPERIENCES

Magnus suffered from insomnia. Despite the application of his dominant will his deep sorrow for Violet—the ever-sweet angel of his life—made him restless and despondent. And then he would take a walk out into the suburbs of the city and even out on the frozen plains, or he would stroll down town without looking to right or left.

One day when he was down town in the early evening he happened to pass a very much frequented hotel.

The glamor from the open saloon extended its conjuring attractivity towards him as he stopped in front of it. He had never touched intoxicants, never taken the first tumbler, never sipped from a whisky-glass. He stood there and wondered what did draw the big crowd that were there. He had read many accounts of bacchanals and their joy-inspiring power; that all sorrows were easily drowned in Bacchus' sweet nectars of bliss; that all disappointments, distress and affliction vanished into oblivion in alcohol's embosoming charms.

But all this was claimed to be of temporary nature and that most revels had aftermaths of bitter regrets and physical and mental decline. All this and more he thought he knew by others' exemplifications. Ergo, he was not hard on experimenting. But now it seemed awfully fascinating, covetous and yet filthy. The sour, ruddy faces, dilated, swollen eyes and froths of inebriating liquids on voracious lips. He heard delirious twaddles, furious exclamations and interjections like the commotive turmoil of a madhouse. The atmosphere reeking with smoke and whisky odors, was in itself suffocating, but notwithstanding, a fierce, unrelenting temptation battled in order to fetter his will, his reason and his self-respect; some sorcerer was within him or operating on or through him pointing to his grief and from there to the pearly wines glittering in the golden goblets, and he moved nearer step by step until he was inside the door itself; patrons were coming in

and out. One fellow, holding glass in hand, wearing tattered clothes, accosted him, "Come in here, have a drink and be happy," he chuckled.

Magnus did not answer; tears were in his eyes, and his worn and haggard face evinced anguish.

The boozier continued: "You need a stimulant, you are tired and dejected, I can see it. I am an unfortunate man. You may be in a like fix and so have a drink on me. I have still a dollar to spend."

Magnus' lips quivered. Had he not promised his mother never to take ~~the~~ first drink, no matter how cruel his destiny? Had he not resolved to be a man—to be all to himself? "No thank you," he answered dismally.

"Ay, ay," laughed the man with the drink in his hand. "I don't know what vexes or troubles you, but I believe there's something that does. As to myself, I can testify that the only solace, the only mitigation and alleviation of the sufferings of my heart, the only queller of the sorrow of my soul is the celestial fountain, this here red, red wine. It is the only satisfaction and gratification obtainable, the only heaven allotted me on this earth." His sensation incited by the distilled beverage made him quake, his eyes emitting drops of tears. "When I was of the same age as you, I surmise," he almost whispered, "I loved a charming girl and she loved me, but cruel fate separated us, her narrow-minded parents opposed the match. We were kept apart until she suicided on account of her love for me—a holy love that should have bloomed and budded, but that never did."

A silence ensued, then he quaffed the remainder in his glass and placed both his nerve-shaken hands on Magnus' powerful shoulders and said, friendly: "Will you not join in the blessing that is all my life to me?" Then he added, sobbingly: "Since I lost my love, her that was my world, forever, I do one thing and always the one thing only. I drink, drink, drink. I fall asleep dead-drunk. I dream about drinking and I awaken to drink again. I'm always drinking, drinking, drinking."

Chills of horror mingled with waves of sore pity were in Magnus' expression as he grasped the drunkard's hand and said, "Thanks, but I don't drink, and good-bye."

Well he knew that remonstrances and persuasions would be utterly futile as regarded the passion-doomed,

all-depraved man, and like a sudden gale breaking stifling suitriness he smashed through a dense group of boozers who almost blocked the entrance.

"That's a giant," he heard them comment.

Just outside the door he almost collided with an evangelist.

"Stop! young man," he demanded. "You have been in and you came out of the worst nursery of sin and vice on this earth!"

"Is that any of your business?" answered Magnus, derisively.

"My business?—rather so, yes; my business is to save souls, to save you," said the inspired commissary of the Lord in his loud, shrilly voice.

"Ha, ha!" chuckled Magnus, coldly.

"My ungodly man," cried the holy representative of heaven, "I'm afraid, in fact I don't doubt that you are on a direct road to hell," and his pious face became gloomily sad.▲

"Do not worry about me; try to save somebody else; do not waste your time on me, for that will be in vain," said Magnus, an ironical smile curving the corners of his mouth, increasing the annoyance of the evangelist.

"God has conferred on me the privilege to lead every one unto Him. It is my duty to do what He bids me. Now you float with the current of infidelity and sin and you naturally land in hell, or where should you land but there? I must save you."

"Save me, no thank you; I am going to save myself."

"I am sorry that you are indifferent as to the Lord's will," argued the missionary angrily. "You should not throw away His protecting arms, my man, and here is a Bible that will bring to you full cognition of God's great truths," thundered he, holding towards Magnus a pocket-book. "It costs only twenty-five cents."

"Keep your Bible, gentleman," said Magnus plainly.

"Look! heed! listen!" vociferated the missionary. "If you buy this Bible you will never feel the stings of sorrow any more and all the desires of your soul will be granted you by the Lord, who will then purify you and purge you from all sin and make you happy forever."

Magnus made no reply, but walked away slowly.

"You are going to hell; nothing can save you, nothing!" echoed in his ears.

## CHAPTER ELEVENTH

## VIOLET DREAMS

Violet's fall on the marble floor rendered her unconscious. In that state she was carried to her room by her mother. The restoration to perception of living objects dawned on her gradually. At first her senses were robed in numb obscurity, but presently the pain-taking reality of reminiscence rushed like torrents of fire through her delicate threads of perceptivity. Her mother was stroking her hair. She bent down to kiss her. But Violet sealed her lips by her trembling hand. How could she indulge in caresses of such a mother! The telephone rang. Trapson desired his wife to prepare a punch for him, so she left the room.

Violet's head ached severely. It was as if the vehement pain waving and pulsing would cleave her head. But her heart and soul suffered more. Her remorse turned into a merciless despair. Why had she lacked courage? Why did she tolerate to let her mother hold and soothe her, when her lover was prostrating himself before the throne of her love? And he entreated her with all the fervor of his loveful pride to follow him out into the cold, the dark and the uncertain! But, oh! she hesitated. Yet all her future had been at stake. Why had she not realized the all-importance of that fateful hour? Oh! she was so young and inexperienced, and it had all been so sudden, so quick to pass.

She recalled his premonitions. They had come true. And in an awful light. She had been like St. Peter, who, despite warnings from his Master, denied Him in the hour of danger and despair. Like the apostle, she understood too late. The fortress of her father's million separated them. On the other side he, her only refuge, her only trust and love, was fighting in the cold, the dark and the uncertain alone, without hope and with a pride that aimed to cow his craving for her love. She deducted that he would always consider it below his pride to accept her love again, or become reconciled with her, because she did not follow him out



into the cold, the dark and the uncertain at the trial of their love. And was he not right? Could she claim his adoration when he might one day be a wealthy man? She had let the opportunity slip to share his privations and struggles. Therefore she had lost her happiness, most likely forever.

On this side of the fortress of her father's million was she herself. How she was prostrated from regret! How she deplored her weakness and inconstancy! How she condemned, despised and hated herself! How she wished to tread all the flames of inferno if by that she could atone for her unpardonable mistake—the very suicide of her happiness! But that could not be. Nature had no compassion. God had forgotten her altogether, although her parents had taught her that He always protects wealthy people. Life was shorn of alleviation. And now she was so infinitely alone. She knew now that she had always been alone, except the few fast fleeting hours in Magnus' presence.

Sleep avoided her. The night passed on slowly. When the brightness of the following day faded into twilight, Violet, the worn-out victim of life's cruel martyrdom, fell into the arms of a warm, weirdful slumber.

Dreams disclosed their wonder-visions. Gloomy reflections of her dreadful experience appeared. Magnus entered; his brow was dark. He strode towards her father, who recoiled and left the parlor. He seated himself beside her on the lounge. With difficulty of breath he whispered in her ear: "I hoped you were a heroine, but you are a coward not worthy of my love—never worthy to become my bride. Do you understand? You are unsteady, fickle, a toy of vanity and conceit. Poor girl! You elected not me, but the heaven of the gold! Well, I wish you all the blessings the stolen million of your father can bestow on your life. I am going to live alone, for love is deception and hallucination. Only I am so lonely, lone—"

She was alone on the wide, deep ocean, without oars or a helm. Land was nowhere in sight, nor any possible means of succor from the imminent engulfment of mountainous billows, that rose and sank with rapidity and thunderous roars. The greedy face of Roben Goldstone and the divine countenance of a well-known clergyman appeared above the surfs. They grasped for

life and stuck to the one side of the boat. With his right hand the clergyman grabbed hers and joined them to Roben's hand, placed the Bible thereon and babbled some sort of prayers, but a tremendous wave pulled both gentlemen down into the deep and they vanished. . . .

'She was' on the verge of a dreadful canyon, which seemed to be bottomless. To peer down into it was to penetrate the glooms of perdition. Trapson was at her side. "This abyss must be bridged with millions," he said, and Violet saw an enormous serpent cringing across the fearful chasm. And as it neared the brink where they were standing she saw it had a cruel human face; on its forehead she read, "The rich Hooligan Fant." Presently it transformed into a bridge of seemingly solid gold. Trapson rushed out on it. Violet hesitated, but upon his coaxing she stepped out on it too. With a heavily detonating crash it broke down, and she heard a cry of despair from her father deep down into the canyon. With both hands she clung to a stone of the crest. Magnus stood above her holding a rope with both his strong hands. She shouted to him for help. "Your father must be saved first," he replied calmly, pulling up the rope. The great muscles of his arms bulged from exertion, for the corpulent Trapson was heavy in the draw. At last he was all the way up to the verge and Magnus gripped his gray hair with both hands and whirled him over his head like a catch of fish. She heard her father praise him for his succor, but then her strength gave and she fell down into the frightful deep. She fell deeper and deeper, convinced of the canyon having no bottom. At last she gripped a stray decayed branch. And then Magnus had reached her. "I am glad that I rescued you before you fell deeper. This is the abyss of death. I saved you just in the last second." And, oh! how secure and blissful was his embrace.

## CHAPTER TWELFTH

## GERALDINE MAXWELL

Sorrow! How often has that word passed the lips of man! Yet as gloomy it is, as dreary, as desolate, as dreadful, as it ever was. In the train of struggling progress and ahead of it coils and cringes sorrow, spreading pain, devastation and disappointments and the hearts of men. Still the best do suffer most, the noblest souls are victims of the most cruel pangs of fate. Unforewarned humanity becomes often a wreck in the collision of adverse and hostile elements. Love-related beings are torn apart every hour of the day. Sorrow has always been and is and always will be the sworn enemy of the heart, the awe, the horror of life. Sorrow is always allied with dearth of blessed warmth and sore want of heart-isolating light.

Sometimes sorrow comes over our lives like devolving mountains, like overwhelming avalanches, like collapsing skyscrapers, or, as if some other planets of our solar system were, in company with a goodly number of distant constellations, crashing into the crust of our little earth.

Sometimes it is like a sullen creek, murmuring forth its weirdful sing-song, rising unobservedly until it has engulfed the helpless heart and drowned its love, its hopes, its yearnings and its peace. It is, however, above mortals to command the might of symbolizing sorrow's power. The stings of its thorns, the penetrations of its murderful lances, the depth of its abysses, the force of its pressures are but vague delineations. Between every two persons, including those that thrive on interacting mental sympathies, there always exists a hiatus, which admits not of passages of inter-comprehensibilities of human beings.

There are two ways by which to know sorrows of others, namely, through the Roentgen Rays of sharing its burdens, or through a mirror of the most subtle imagination possible. And yet the lines of measure will always be somewhat inaccurate and obscure, or in other words, a matter of conjectures, even at that.

Likewise can one know his own sorrow only insofar as he can feel and comprehend it. And its effects or consequences and its bearings on the ultimate result of life are often mere inferences.

"Man was made to mourn," writes the famous Scotch poet. Unhappily, there are many, oh! so many, that must mourn and can never obtain consolation.

The fragrance of the flowers of pleasure are utterly denied some, while, of course, some others have an over-abundance. Quite a few receive more garlands than they know what to do with; while, of course, there are vast millions, each and every individual of which is never a recipient of so much as one. The children of fortune—by chance or fate, whichever you please to call it—have more friends crowd around them, and more affection lavished upon them, than they know how to cherish or appreciate; while there are, at the same time, human beings incapable to locate a friend in the wide, wide world, yet pointing their compass in all directions, like a seafarer searching for the nearest shore.

It is a miracle, in this age of education and science, and with all the preachings of humanitarianism and brotherhood inducted, that there are hearts that must tremble alone, feelings that find no response, and sublime, soulful thoughts the reward of which is naught but derision and farce. And yet, such miracle is met frequenter than most, if not all, other things, exclusive of or inclusive in the province allotted to that idea.

And because there are friendless souls, because there are lone, bleeding hearts, because there are mutilated hopes, because there are crucified loves, because there are distorted truths, one is entitled to cry out in impatience and intolerance, egged by a conscious claim for equal rights of all capable of thinking and feeling to enjoy happiness—not with aftermaths of thorns of suffering attached to it—but pure and painless, to cry out with the voice of the martyr, "There is no apparent justice in this world or any other."

People are often enwrapped with grief, although surrounded with all the things that money can buy, or directly or indirectly procure.

Most men and women are forced to know what disappointment is—hence do know sorrow.

"Hugur var lettur, thvi hjartad var ungt  
 Tha heimsokti bitra sorgin  
 Og fotatak hennar fanst svo thungt  
 Sem fallandi hamraborgin."

Thus writes a lyric of the Far North.

Sorrow is the unpardonable failure of nature, save when loving friends do counteract it.

Sorrow is THE GREAT WOUND-INFLICTER.  
 Love is THE GREAT HEALER.

Human love—and human love only—can vanquish all sorrow.

So when love is unobtainable, sorrow reigns supreme, without a moment's alleviation from the stinging, perforating flames of the HELL OF PAIN in this world.

Love—and love only—can save him or her, if lost in the sea of sorrow, for love is THE SALVATION OF THE WORLD.

One day when Magnus was standing on the corner of Main street and Portage avenue waiting for a street car en route westward, he happened to see a pompous automobile, in fact the finest he had ever seen. And a startling surprise it became when a richly-dressed young lady walked up to him, saying: "Pardon me, gentleman. My chauffeur is nowhere to be seen. He is tempted for strong drinks. Upon one occasion before he failed to do his service on that account. I said he should have another chance. So he was not dismissed then. Now one of the infernos has haunted him; he seems to have forgotten all about me."

"I am sorry to hear about your trouble," answered Magnus civilly.

"Well, I am going to ask you to escort me home. I trust you, I know you are a gentleman." Her black eyes lusted charmingly.

All this was quaint, but he understood instantly that a resolute woman wanted his service, and he undertook the high mission without a moment's hesitation.

"Oh, you are kind," she praised him. Then her eyes effused a strangely bright radiance, as they focussed in his blue, calm eyes. She elected to sit beside him in the front seat and he felt spells of sweet warmth from her through his body. Her hot breath carried over his senses an agreeable, healthful feeling, the glow of her sun-rosy cheeks as sidelights on the way.

He knew where to go; she lived only one block from Trapson.

"Thank you, thank you," she addressed him as she alighted from the car.

He bowed and was about to take his leave, when she extended to him her hand. "My name is Geraldine Maxwell. I am, oh! so glad to meet you!"

"Magnus Magnusson," he replied gently, as their hands enfolded.

"It is a beautiful, charming name. It is Icelandic," she said with obvious pleasure.

"So you know I am an Icelander?"

"Yes, and a descendant of the old Norse blood. I hope we meet again." Her voice echoed tremblingly.

"Are you Sir Vilomt Hague Maxwell's daughter?" He hesitated slightly.

"Yes. You drove his only daughter, his only love, home." And every word was an ecstasy.

An omen flitted like a shrouded spirit before Magnus' premonitory faculty, which no telologist, theosophist, nor any other man of divine or earthly science has been, so far, able to diagnose, but which telepathic celerity often mirrorized to him, more or less mystically, happenings that had not, as yet, come into existence, but were still in the mysterious embryo of an unborn time.

"Good-bye. And may luck be with you," she said with rapturous thrill, as they parted.

Magnus replied with complimentary adequacy.

And when she opened the door of her mansion, she turned and glanced at Magnus, who was still, without move where she left him. Her eyes were beaming. Her heart was beating as if it would break the walls of her chest.

And in her beautiful mind chimed in ringing voices:

Promets qu'un jour, dans l'oubli de ce monde,

Li'es par notre foi, comme ice-bas,

Nous melerons aux touffes des lilas,

La violette aux prunelles profondes;

Puis enivres de ces apres-encens,

Nous auvrirons notre ame a la harmonia,

Aux murmures que fait la draperie

Des bois sacres,

Tout le printemps.

## CHAPTER THIRTEENTH

## THORKELL'S CHAIN OF FAILURES

When Thorkell left Aaron Hoggart's his troubles did considerably increase. It became difficult for him to get anything to do, and still more difficult, though, to keep in any place at all. He worked in several department stores, grocery shops and meat markets, about a week or two in each. But dismissed on account of incapability was the sad culmination at each turn. Then he got no more chance on a salary basis. So he was forced to make an effort for his life as a commission salesman. The result was that things went from bad to worse.

He represented and endeavored to sell every commodity of good quality known to be put up for sale in a big city. He tackled every honorable sales proposition. But, alas! it all went far short of his necessities. And he was compelled to borrow money from the few that were willing to advance him anything, and even beg for a stray meal when his privation became unendurable.

In desperation he turned to rural labor. But rusticity collided more with his innate ability than anything he had had to put up with in the city. Like an animal ill-fit for any remunerative use, he was obliged to struggle from one callous farmer to another. And after three months' campaign as a farm hand he had earned only five dollars, which should surprise nobody who understands requirements of a modern prairie farm, when we learn that Mr. Nordland put the collar upside down when harnessing his team the very last day he worked on a farm, which goes to prove that he had not acquired skill to harness a horse after a sedulous study of this particular trade for a quarter of a year.

The farmers for whom he, by inconsiderate destiny, worked, regarded him as an exceptional blockhead, a dunce, a fool. Those of them that were most devoted to orthodox religion prayed that it might please the Lord to take Thorkell on a journey to Heaven, where he could rest in the rose-gardens of bliss in company with

good angels, instead of having to work for his living here in Western Canada. But the Lord was in no apparent hurry to escort Thorkell thither, and our martyr-musician was not anxious for such, either, for he had, by this time, discarded all inculcated faith in a possible existence of a good God and eternity.

And from his most miserable field of defeat in trying to get on—farm-work—Thorkell arrived in Winnipeg “dead-broke.” A severe Canadian winter threatened him, like the brutal fist of a merciless tyrant.

The mythology of Christian religion designated a Satan, who, as is well known, lured Eve to taste a well-matured apple. And the curiosity caused her entry into the valley which borders life and death, to deliver her very many children. And our lovely Creator is supposed to have cursed all mankind ever since, and consigned at least ninety per cent. to total depravity and perdition.

The mythology of the Brahma religion designates a Satan, probably a brother of the fellow that did the trouble in Eden, who, by the aid of a mirage, charmed a lovely and love-devoted couple away from the beautiful island of Ceylon to the continent of Asia. This trickery brought the man and wife on the rocks of famine and at contrariety to Brahma, whose explicit orders were that they should never, not even temporarily, leave the region of felicitous beauty, where a thousand golden harps chimed on every tree, and which, as a kingdom of theirs, he especially allotted them. But instead of blaming each other, as Eve and Adam did, this self-married pair absolved each other's blame, as behoved true lovers. And Brahma, judging from a different premise from that of Jehovah, when adjudicating the evil consequences of Satan's perfidy, forgave them.

The third Satan, who does not boast kinship to these aforesaid ones of world prominence, but whose destructive power is, nevertheless, felt by agnostics and gnostics, by atheists and theists, by materialists and spiritualists, by rational theologians and orthodox people alike, haunted Thorkell Nordland on his slide down to ruin. This Satan, otherwise known as King Bacchus, and to people on this continent more familiarly still as John Barleycorn, pretended to be Thorkell's best friend and, at times, his only friend. And our violinist had a great temptation for intoxicants. And why? Not be-



cause he enjoyed their flavor. He felt the taste of whisky and brandy extremely bitter. Even beer was not what could be termed delicious to his palate. He was obliged to conduct his drinking thus: First, two or three beers, then brandy and whisky for the rest of it. Obviously, then, the effects or the imagined cure of this insidious remedy, so frequently resorted to by victims of misfortune, but not the fluid itself, was the reason.

Meanwhile he loved Alma. Yes, he loved her without thought. It must have been her body that he loved, not her soul. And she? Why, she loved him more than her little self could establish! Could she then be any sort of angel sentry to him? Did she warn him of the irresistible and conjuring treachery of the gay and apparently winsome saloon? Did she tell him to beware of the all-devouring snake concealed in the purpling sparkles of alcoholic beverages?

You could not, dear reader, expect a frivolous pet of a wealthy aristocrat to do any such thing. She was a charming flower, tempting to look upon, soft to feel with the palm of the hand, but destitute of enduring color, and devoid of deep-inspirable fragrance. We are up against many such sapless plants in this world of unregulated and unscientific mating of men and women. Great pains are taken to make cattle, sheep and hogs improve by proper breeding. Only mankind can go on wild, deteriorating or ameliorating the whole bunch at will, or by blind chance-work.

People who think but very little, quite satisfied with a lot of ignorance on most vital points of life, more or less negligently bred, and who almost en masse dislike being bothered with enlightening books, propagate in enormous numbers; while intellectual giants, great thinkers and men of genius, are either unmarried because, selection being extremely difficult and rare, they have only the alternative to spend a single life or wed an altogether unfit mate, or if such persons are married, have but very few children. Things cannot go more exactly wrong, can they?

And as to little Alma Hoggart once more. There are many budding beauties who fascinate one for a fleeting moment. But its magnificence is only "skin-deep." And the discovery of the terrible truth is most disconcerting, unhappy, painstaking and horrible!

## CHAPTER FOURTEENTH

## TWO LOVERS

Thorkell and Magnus collided at a corner near one of the big hotels. The former was in a big rush for a decanter of intoxicants. The latter was quite taken up with pondering on life's seriousness. It was in the surging eddy of the 5 o'clock crowd that the two greatest heroes of this story jostled against each other.

The sudden contact shocked the violinist. Magnus placed both his strong hands on the artist's quivering shoulders. And it steadied Thorkell.

"Oh, you are nervous and sensitive, my friend," accentuated Magnus with a cadence of melancholy.

Thorkell agreed in silence. Tremulous waves on his lips indicated clearer than words his excitability.

"My chum," said Magnus very tenderly; in fact, his voice had the modulation of a child. "I appreciate your company very much," he went on. "It would gladden me immensely if you would spend with me this ensuing evening."

"Your strength of nerves and muscles equals that of a giant prizefighter. It is therefore truly exceptional that you can speak with such tenderness, such wonderful expression of feeling," eulogized Thorkell with thrilling emotion.

"Sympathy, the budding crown of the rose of passion, is the highest expression of real strength," elucidated Magnus.

"Quite true," confirmed Thorkell. And his emotion heightened more still. "I am infinitely glad to hear you speak these beautiful words."

"My utterances are the living terms of what I mean. I am your friend."

"And, oh! I wish I could be such to you." The sentence was a melody.

"You can, and perhaps will." The words reverberated confidence.

"Despite my instability and spasmodicism?"

"Despite everything."

"You come to my room and chat," said Magnus gently.

"But I must have a drink first, mustn't I? It is so cold I almost shiver!"

"Do not say you must! Say that you must not!" And Magnus' weighty influence turned Thorkell's mad craving into temporary repellence.

"You are right. I must not. I will go with you."

The atmosphere was ~~crisp~~ with cold. The snow on the sidewalk was inured by footprints of very many pedestrians. Its crust was a glazed, slippery sheet. Our friends hastened towards Magnus' lodgment. And the sound of their brisk pace bore the evidence of the dismal tide of midwinter.

All of a sudden did Thorkell whisper into his friend's ear: "You are through with Trapson. I know all. Alma was there last night. Violet is disconsolate and —"

"Who says I am through with him?" interrupted Magnus with a powerful emphasis. "But as to the matter. We won't mention it any further. You understand." His voice was like an undercurrent of a thunder.

"Well, as you say," said Thorkell with great flurry. He then undertook to apologize with the object in view to atone for his—under prevalent circumstances—flippancy, and every word rang with sentimentality only characteristic of an art-hallowed soul.

"You are so impulsive. You are——"

"Well, of course, 'man acts as he must.' And I am as I am made," interposed Thorkell zealously.

By this time they had reached their destination. Magnus opened the gate. And the physical giant and the frail musician walked arm in arm up the stairs to Magnus' room.

When the electric light was brightly burning—every little room in Winnipeg is illumined with electricity—and they had seated comfortably, a lively conversation ensued. Thorkell introduced the subject he had most at heart, and talked with great enthusiasm and emotionality about his and Alma's union of love.

"Are you sure that you love her?" questioned Magnus, at a point when Thorkell's eloquent encomium of

the joy of his heart in Alma's embrace slackened somewhat.

Thorkell had really never figured nor reasoned that out. But still, this sudden enquiry mortified him, and he shouted excitedly: "What! wh—what! I—I am sure," he stammered. "Well, I am so, so happy in Alma's presence. I am so, so elated when I drink the sweet fountain of her kisses, so much stirred to indulgence, to enjoyment of hugging passion in her hot, wild caresses!" sighed Thorkell, twittering with agitation.

"Wild caresses, did you say?"

"I mean intense."

"Yes. You mean something you have not thought about."

"It is thrilling!" cried Thorkell, as if not conniving but failing to observe Magnus' significant words.

"Its thrills do not, however, touch your very self—your very soul. They only flatter your vision and perfume your senses of smell and feeling."

Thorkell was about to flare up in irascibility and irritability. But he managed to restrain himself till the waves of his sensation receded somewhat.

"Was not love an imponderable thing, at most times, or always?" thought he. "Why did Magnus fall so deep in love with Violet, who was evidently but a fondled, petted darling of stupid parents?" mused Thorkell further. He longed to put the latter question to Magnus, but he curbed it when it was about to leap from his lips.

"I have composed a melody about Alma. I have rhymed words to it." Then Thorkell hummed it several times. His voice rang sweetly with joy. He saw Alma's smiling face while he tilted forth the soft tune. And at that moment it seemed to Magnus that the musician was actually intoxicated with love.

"I like your composition, including both melody and words," emphasized Magnus.

"I am glad to hear that," answered Thorkell.

"But I am sorry that you dedicated it to Alma Hoggart."

"Why?" queried Thorkell, startled.

"Because she is not worth it. Every stanza and every lilt is prodigal of praise. You worship vanity."

"You don't mean this!" exclaimed Thorkell, incensed.

"It is the truth."

Thorkell chafed the floor. His whole figure shook from the intense effect of Magnus' provocation.

"The day will come when you will be convinced that you never knew her anything at all, and that she has never understood you and never will." Magnus' admonition was as gentle as a fatherly reprimand.

Thorkell's irritation gradually receded. He sat down and stared on the floor.

"Dear friend," went on Magnus, "I cannot help but I feel impelled to impress on you the necessity to stabilize your standard of life. Between you and Alma is a chasm that cannot be bridged. Between you and a successful future is a weakness of character that must be overcome. And you can do it. And you must do it."

Thorkell did not reply.

"Give me one copy of your melody, written with your own hand. I'd love to own it."

"Here is one. You can have it. Your request is a matter of great pleasure to me," replied Thorkell gladly.

"But you have not another one!" interrupted Magnus.

"Yes. I have the soul of this tune in my heart. And I cannot forget it. It will live in my memory as long as I live. Longer!" This single word blazing with power.

"You mean?"

"I mean, of course, that the words will die, but the melody—the melody!" ejaculated Thorkell, intensely excited, "can never die!"

When Thorkell had finished his unartificial performance, Magnus sighed deeply.

And Thorkell continued to paint his future happiness in his union with Alma.

"Distilled beverages will not conduce to a happy goal. You must give up alcohol. It tends to complete ruin. And it will in no time destroy what is still left of your health." Magnus' advocacy was a behest.

"But my dear Alma does not mind it, nor admonish me. She is too jocund, I s'pose," replied Thorkell.

"Does Alma's father know that you and his daughter are affianced?" asked Magnus.

"No, I don't think he does. I believe nobody knows anything about it except she, I and you. We both shun all thought about any eventual troubles and cherish fleeting moments. I sometimes apprehend possible intermeddlers later on. And my disagreeable apprehen-

sion deluges my heart with anxiety. In slanderous intermeddling or cruel persecution lies grave peril."

"No doubt," answered Magnus mechanically. "If such things do occur, which is quite within likelihood, they will prove beyond your power of resistance and endurance."

"If I lose Alma, what is there left?" shouted Thorkell in an immediate burst of emotion.

"Yourself!" Magnus put a tremendous emphasis on this single word.

"And yet, it is so hard, nay, more—even impossible, to stand alone!" groaned Thorkell, with characteristic weakness.

"You are as much alone with Alma as you are without. Now, man must stand alone if need be," accented Magnus. "If you only knew yourself, how exceptional and original you are, you would comprehend at this moment that Alma does not correspond to your great, inherent qualities, that perhaps one, if any, woman in the world is a true counterpart and supplement to your soul." Magnus' sympathetic undertone thrust itself upon Thorkell's spirit.

"According to this, I have not found, but must try to locate, a woman that can understand me apart from prejudice and everything that I am up against. I am a victim of a universal misunderstanding and misrepresentation," wailed Thorkell.

"Yes, sure you are!"

Both chums were silent for a few moments. Magnus stared through the uncurtained window on dark clouds wafting before the cold breeze of the night.

"There are men, unfortunately there are—and I am most likely one of them—who cannot stand alone, who fail if alone. Take, for instance, Gestur Palson. He died from exposure, like a dog, in the prime of his life, here in Winnipeg, after prolonged revels. These novelistic sketches are excellent, and he lifts a torch to view the awful verity of life's boundless cruelty when he says:

"I'll seek and find one, yes, only one soul, who loves me and knows me and all that is mine."

"But he never found the soul that his yearning sought. He could not obtain the salvation of his life, hence he failed, hence he got lost."

And he delineated with masterly ingenuity the state of the truly unfortunate when from the abyss of abandonment he cries out with all the horror of human despair:

"Who can ascribe the lameness, the languor, pain and dearth  
That martyrs of life's fortune must suffer on this earth."

Thorkell drew his breath with difficulty. The subtlety and intensity of his citations caused all his frame to shake and tremble like a surging sea.

Magnus' eyes were still fastened on the roving mists of the sky.

"Professor McFrazier pronounced my last concerto a great success," Thorkell resumed. "He devoted a column in all the dailies to my praise. He is, as you know, conceded to be the ablest musician in Western Canada, hence his comment should have already convinced even an aristocrat like Aaron Hoggart of the fact that I have some ability for improvement."

Magnus turned his gaze suddenly from the window and looked his friend full in the face. Shadows of sadness swept in successive waves over his face.

"My dear Thorkell, I understand you better than any other man. I know you are an artist and that you have in you the power to conquer the world. But the road to your victory is hard. Art counts for naught in the business bustle of this country. Aaron Hoggart owns half a million. But you are poor."

Thorkell's intelligent countenance dimmed. The bright sparkles of his eyes had a line of tears. His lips quivered.

"What is advancement in my pursuit good for if it cannot help me to attain fulfilment of my dearest yearning? It seems to me that love brings forth on its wings every note I produce, and is the incentive of every stride I make in my study," sighed he.

"Yes, I know all this." Magnus spoke with manifest compassion.

"I could not live without Alma!" cried our violinist.

"You cannot now. But later on you can, or rather, some other time you may be compelled to."

"Then I die from despair!" wailed Thorkell with awe.

"No, you won't! Surely you will never resort to suicide! You have, despite your physical frailties, more courage than you ever dreamed of, and there is in you more real man than you can believe at this moment." And the firmness of Magnus' utterances was like a cascade on Thorkell's sensitive, unpoised system.

"You are trying to make me doubt that my great love, may not be returned," charged Thorkell.

"I am not discouraging you. But I want to have you realize that love is often a snare. Steingrimur Thorsteinson, our great poet, says:

"The sorest thorn-sting has the sweetest rose of eyes,  
And the reptile lies hiding in beauty's paradise;  
The gilded cloud turns to flake that darkens and  
dreads,  
And the charm of our dreams is but merciless tears."

"Ever since I was a little boy have I loved and lost," cried Thorkell.

"And yet you believe that your present love-affair is a winning proposition. Unfortunately, idealists and artists are incapable to confront actuality. They prefer hopes and dreams to facing solid facts. In their enthusiasm they are apt to overlook that human faults and mistakes are firmly entrenched in human nature. Great genius is rarely understood until after centuries. A good many artists have been obliged to die a pauper's death; while works of most marvelous men are not appreciated until after their death, when they are, presumably, beyond all ability to enjoy the pathos of finding themselves recognized and understood. Art and practicability go very seldom hand in hand. Carlyle says: 'The poetical soul is the darling of nature.' He forgot the sequel, namely, that poets are the chosen victims of martyrdom. You are a poet of verse and melody. What can you expect?"

Both sat with drooping heads, without words. The profundity of life's seriousness prevailed above speech. But then, so as to relieve the strenuousness of the situation, Magnus rose, lit his pipe, offered his friend tobacco, and both began to smoke. And the curly fumes winging upwards and in a circle and then downwards, brought over Thorkell's excited nerves, soothing, tranquilizing effect.



## CHAPTER FIFTEENTH

## LOVE WITHOUT PRIDE

When the trio arrived at the spacious dance-hall, the Crescentwood Coliseum, they heard the drumming sounds of the orchestra as they entered the big vestibule, from which they proceeded to the dressing-chamber. They made a finishing touch of their toilet and then joined in the ball. Alma and Thorkell presented Magnus to a number of young ladies. Many of them flushed as they encountered the magnetic influence of his elegant and impressive figure. And, indirectly, he was introduced to all the other young ladies, as the night went on, their curiosity a sequence of his tactful deportment and natural attractiveness.

Alma and Thorkell danced, of course, the first dance together. And Magnus turned to the one next to him. And while swinging her flexibly over the glassy floor, she thought how lovely it would be to be carried by such strong, protective arms, which symbolized wings, all through life. He enjoyed the dance. Yet his thoughts tarried not by the girl he was dancing with, but where they had to be.

His next dance was with Alma Hoggart. She was flushed to her hair. She was impressed with Thorkell, of course, but also with the virility and elegance of Magnus. She trembled. But he was absorbed in ponderance on Thorkell's fate, and in consequence did not notice it.

When he turned from her, he met Lady Geraldine Maxwell. He bowed and she quickly grasped his hand and pressed it magnetically. "Pleased to meet you," he said at random.

"I am extremely happy to meet you," she responded in a loud, charming voice. Many of the young folks wondered at the concern the wealthiest girl in Western Canada lavished on this stranger. But some of the young wealthy ladies understood and bit their lips.

"May we dance the next dance together?" she suggested, her black eyes burning.

Magnus accepted it with becoming compliments. But her intense trembling, as she nestled with his broad breast, made him feel somewhat queer. He saw her sparkling eyes repose on his face unintermittently, and her hot breath was evidently thrilled with intense emotion. Surely she was an embodiment of womanliness! Her snow-white lily-hands, her charmingly formed bosom, heaving and swelling like the heart of the sea, her massive, black hair, her eyes dark as the night, her cheeks and lips in full bloom of life's sweet spring. But despite her fascination, despite her immense wealth, despite her social realm, qualities that invite jealousy of almost all young men, and despite his friendlessness and state of proletarianism, he was fain, when the dance was over.

He escorted her to a seat and paid a tribute of formality to her. Then he made haste for another partner. But when that dance came to an end his lot was with Lady Geraldine Maxwell again. And so she, as if by masterly agility, happened to be almost on the spot where Magnus was looking for a dance-mate, always offering her hand. Her talk was vivacious and unrestrained. Between dances and during special intermissions decreed, they discussed poetry, drama and song, as well as high-class literature. She demonstrated a wide range of intellect and cognition. Thus, she quoted profusely from the great poets of Latin and Greek, and also from those of modern times. His interest in literature conduced him to propose a withdrawal from the ball for an hour, which proved, notwithstanding its brief duration, that she had mastered the languages and had read the works of all the greatest authors of America, England, France, Germany, Italy, Russia and the Scandinavian countries. She did open the portals of the Saga-world. And Magnus strolled away, for a short space of time, into the land of the freedom's fame of old.

When they resumed dancing after their interlocution, he felt half-way repulsive towards this splendid woman, who had all the qualities men should respect, adore and love. But love is blind, and his heart blinded his—in all other practical ways—stable reason.

His love was where he first gave it. It had dawned upon him that the high-born personage he held in his

arms in the whirling swings of the dance, was as great in love as in her profound intellectual and literary qualities. He gradually became aware that he was playing a tragic role, imposed upon him by ill-balanced incidentalities and colliding fundamentals. And he resolved to act with all the resources of reason, tact and temperament at his disposal.

The more they danced together the more this noble soul approached him. Every nerve in tension, every muscle of her strong frame quaked and quivered. Her breast was like a swelling sea. Her heart was all on fire to its deepest depths. The violent beats of her pulse, surging with real womanliness and true womanly pride, carried by contact of both its impulses to him.

An hour or so before break of day an intermission was adopted. Most of the dancers made a dash for the apartment where refreshments were served. Lady Geraldine Maxwell declined Magnus' proffered tea and suggested that they better seek a cooler place.

"Viljith thir coma meth mer ut a svalirnar herra, Magnusson?" she addressed him in pure Icelandic. Magnus' curiosity was not a little aroused.

"Why, you know my dear, beautiful mother tongue, too!" he replied. And the evident admiration in his words were more to Lady Geraldine Maxwell than all the caresses and kisses of her devoted mother.

He thought of Violet, who could not speak a word in Icelandic, and yet she had a parent born and bred in Iceland.

Surely this wonderful girl was in this, as in everything else, far, far superior to his beloved Miss Trapson!

They walked in silence to the balcony. And Lady Geraldine Maxwell's well-built, soft arm, resting on his, trembled like a leaf in the fierce storms of autumn. The silvery beams of the full moon penetrated the frost-adorned window panes and cast its magic spells on them as they stopped, looking at the solace of the night shining in azure blue and lending its pale brilliance.

Magnus turned his look from the moon towards her, and their eyes met deeply, significantly. Surely her great stature was a glorious ocean of fulgence. She loosened the knots that tied her beautiful hair upon her head, and it fell in waves not only to her waist, but almost touched her heels. It was raven-black and its

massiveness shrouded all her body save her burning, lustrous face.

"Magnus," and the mentioning sounded angel-like, "it astonished you that I can talk your cradle-speech. But I love to talk to you in the same language as your dear mother did, for I think the same is very dear to you." Every word was emotionized like sentimental music.

"Yes, you are right. My mother-tongue sounds sweetly, dearly," he replied affably.

"Magnus," and her voice was relenting, suppliant, imploring, "I love Iceland. I love the Icelandic language. I love the Icelandic people. I love the Icelandic songs. I love Icelandic art and poetry. But above all, I love the Icelandic love-lyrics, because, because——"

The uneasiness within him, tending to enervation and collapse, was mastered by a supreme test of his will.

"Oh, they are beautiful, dreamy, inspiring," he asserted at random, yet candidly and winsomely.

"I love to hear you say so." Her saying was a living harp of a soul. "Of all your poets of note, I love Steingrímur Thorsteinson most, because his love-songs are so heartfelt, so soulful," she said reverently.

"Yes, Steingrímur Thorsteinson has the reputation of being the most begifted interpreter of love that Iceland ever had," he corroborated.

"You know the poem 'Svo fjaer mer a veril?'"

"To be sure," he echoed.

"I will recite for you, for I delight so infinitely much in so doing." And so saying she began:

"Svo fjaer mer a vori nu situr thu sveinn,  
En samt ertu hja mer thvi hamlar ei neinn  
Eg finnthig i dalnum theim dulda;  
Meth hugann til thin yfir, fjollin eg flyg,  
Svo fluglett sem skugginn i spor thin eg stig,  
Og leynist vith hlith ther sem Hulda."

The enunciation, articulation, accentuation and syllabification were all complete and correct.

Magnus was amazed. He had never known such a genius of talent. But he found his bearings presently and declared, "Your recitation was faultless."

"I am charmed by your words of approbation," she said.

"Well, I always avoid cajoling statements of any one's quality, for I consider exaggerating praise an excogitated scheme, aimed for undue yet often imperceptible insinuations for one's own benefit."

The generosity of this virtuous avowal was an incantation to her soul over and above all comparison.

"I am happy above words to hear this," she attributed, "and you saying that it was faultless amounts to the same as pronouncing it perfect," she added charmingly.

"Yes, it really meant that."

"Do you know if the stanza I recited has ever been translated into English?"

"I don't know for sure, but I rather think not."

"You have never seen it in English?" she emphasized.

"No, I have not," he assured.

"I conveyed its meaning into English the very night after we first met. I lay awake all through its dreamy oneness. I was thinking, I was——" She faltered, yet trying with all her might to subdue the increasing flutter of her voice. "I will recite it for you, if you please allow me, and I will ask your valuable judgment about it." She then said it slowly, solemnly:

"At rose-time, my swain, thou art far, far from me,  
Yet none can impede that I meet face with thee,  
Where love-land my life interlaces;  
And o'er lofty mountains my thoughts to thee soar,  
On wings of your shadow thy footsteps I pore,  
Like Hula my heart thee embraces."

"Your version is all right; at least I'm not in a position to say anything else about it. Of course, I'm not a critic and——"

"Well," she interrupted zealously, "that is enough for me." And behind these trustful words was all her noble soul, whole and holy.

"Magnus!" The accent was so singular, so original. "I have travelled constantly abroad for two years. I have listened to all the greater masters of vocalization and instrumentation in Chicago, New York, London, Paris, Berlin, Rome and Copenhagen. I have seen the greatest dramas performed. I have heard the world's greatest orators and men of science propound their

views. I have seen the greatest and most wonderful storehouses of arts. I have, on account of my social standing, been one of the leading figures in several society circles in Europe and America. I have had and will have, so long as I live, all my wishes fulfilled that can be bought with gold. But it has not, does not, and never can, make me happy."

Magnus asked his brain for a befitting, consistent answer, but was denied.

She spoke on, her cultivated constrain battling desperately to check her bursting emotion. "The ~~wealth~~ of my father would, at my bid, be all at my feet to use as would please me best. But that could not overthrow, not even palliate, a deadly despair, if need be, could avail nothing. My enlightenment, which has naturally enlarged the horizon of my thinking, and my environments, splendid as they are, have not such inherent properties as would satisfy the soul of a true and ideal woman. That is how I realize it. What the heart demands as indispensable to its peace and joy, will always be, I believe, providing one is absolutely frank to oneself, tantamount to that of the soul. Or, in other words, the heart and the soul must converge in a focus. And the product is true love. Outside of that, life is worth nothing." Her bosom was a sea of sighs, doubt and expectancy, combatting for life or death.

Magnus was like a solid petrification, as he stood there before him, and so close that her throbs almost commingled with his own. It was more disclosed to him than ever before in this drama that they were both in an impossible dilemma. It was no sort of enigma. And he was at a loss how to act. He wished he was millions of miles remote. He longed to rush away. But urbanity demanded his utmost patience.

"Well, that may be all true, but——"

"There is no 'but' about it," she interpolated infinitely gently, but with all the surges of her heart. "Without love life is a cemetery and the heart a tomb."

"Lady Maxwell," he said, and there was a sympathy and sadness in his words, "I entertain serious views about life in some respects, and I know fate is sometimes cruel; cruel."

"Yes, sometimes it is and sometimes not. That is why some either commit suicide or carry on a soul-

hungry—I mean love-hunger existence—the latter course intangible to my views; while others are as happy as I love to be, for they live in an Earthly Heaven, an Earthly Paradise.

“I cannot judge this in its entirety; I cannot know what I myself could do under similar conditions until I have lived my life to its end. But I grant that a strong man must live for duty’s sake, even though his dearest yearnings never come true, and his life never comes in living contact with the soul that he loves and that truly loves him.”

“But I contend with authority that loveless life cannot be real life. And, oh! life should be real! Even the universalist must admit, if he be sincere, that from the home—the home, where love reigns supreme—flow the gentlest and most victorious currents of good will to all, of brotherhood, equal justice and charity, not cognate to that of pauperizing, but a cognizance of man’s right as a man.”

He did not reply. He could find nothing in his vocabulary either ready for a retort or confirmation. But in his heart of hearts, admiration reigned, the equal of which he never experienced before nor after.

“Love’s harmony between man and woman constitutes the true home,” she went on. And her soul made her utterances chime like deathless harps. “The true home is a perfect unit, and if all homes were homes of a holy love between man and woman, the whole world would be a big unit of brotherhood, prosperity and happiness.”

Magnus thought of a retort, but his brain was in a quaint trance.

“This may be,” he almost snapped, and then added: “I delight in your intellect, your education, your courage, your unmistakable generosity, but——”

“But that is all!” and her sigh seemed to Magnus like a smothering weight devolving on himself. He fully comprehended now. But how could he help it? He loved Violet. She was his first love. Yes, he loved her. Did he not? Surely he did! And although he was never going to marry her, he still loved——

He was disturbed to an intense degree. Sudden as a flash, she flung her arms around his neck, and with all

the force of her strong body and all the heat and magnanimity of her soul, pressed him to her heart.

"Magnus! Magnus! Magnus!" she sobbed with power of feeling, fervor and tenderness that knew no limit, "I love you! I love you! I love you! You and none else! I love you always, always, always! Without your love my life is my cemetery, and my heart my tomb."

For a few glorious moments he was in a state of complete inertia. He saw nothing but two celestially blazing and burning eyes, he felt nothing but the thrilling, throbbing heat of her body stream through his own, like comfortable, sweet, curing currents. His thoughts were napping during these incomparable swifts of time; nay, he felt as if he were dreaming, forgetting all. She pressed an infinitely soft, burning, hallowed, holy kiss on his big, blooming lips, the effect of which he felt in his soul all his life. It was infinitely tender, infinitely warm, infinitely trustful, infinitely soulful.

She released him from her embrace, slowly, by and by, as if heaven itself was gliding away from her bosom at the hour of death. She knew it had to be so.

"I do not apologize. I know you understand that love-claims are infinite, and that the power of a devoted love knows no bounds and suggests irresistibly to break all bonds."

"I submit to your logic," he affirmed very sadly, "but I must say, although it be hard, even for me, to have to say it, that we must part as lovers, but not as if we had never met."

"I am compelled to understand. But still I do not regret what I have said or done." Her inflamed feelings were so forcefully subdued by the calling out of her reserves of will, that her voice scarcely twittered.

"No, you need not," he assured her with a candor that was convincing. "From now on we can be friends that respect each other in a high sense of that term. And it would be invaluable for me to discuss with you art, science and literature, for you are so above me in intelligence and education and in many——"

"No more of such intolerable comments; no more of such impossible talk, for mercy's sake!" A flow of salt tears crashed through her fortified constraint. "You are not above me, you are my equal. Arrogance is not,



compatible with my love. Mine, oh! mine is love! I know I love you!" And all her body trembled with her immense emotion.

And with the serene beauty of rainbow-colors, the pearls of her tears glowed and glittered on her charming, budding cheeks.

"But we can be friends, can we not?" He took both her hands, trying to smile.

"We cannot be friends, but only acquaintances as we are," she lamented. "Only he who accepts all my love, and whose unreserved love I get back, is my friend. All other people are but acquaintances."

"Your father and your mother, are they not your friends?" he protested gently.

"No; the only one that can save my life and whose life I can save is my friend."

"My dispute was merely an awkward attempt to mend matters," he said, low and soft.

"You cannot amend; you have nothing to amend; it is nature's fault."

"That is true," he resounded.

"Magnus, why can't you love me?"

"Need I tell you now, when I do tell you I cannot?"

"Yet all that is mine is at your feet. No more need you be friendless and alone, as I know you are. I would take you by my arm before the proud world. I would travel with you all over the earth if you wished. I would lead you into the big concert-halls and opera-castles, and the theatres of the most famous dramas. I would show you the most celebrated museums and the greatest beauty-spots known on this planet. I would bring you into society, where you deserve to be. And I would always be proud of you, always I would sacrifice all I possibly could. I would sacrifice my whole life if by so doing I could make you love me, yes, win your love, which is my life to me."

"Lady Maxwell," said Magnus with cadence of a suppressed moan, "I desire you to know, if possible, that our situation is strainful, even for me. But I cannot, I cannot help it."

"I gave you the first kiss I ever gave a man. You are the first man I ever pressed to my heart. My love is yours forever. My love is yours for all eternity. Dea-

tiny has brought me a choice of life or death in you. Because we met, my fate is sealed."

Magnus was deadly silent. And oh! how he longed to soothe and pacify the lovely being in front of him!

She looked through the window. The first faint gleam of dawn—of the first day of her doom—was gently peeping in the sky. She tied her massive hair in one bundle upon her head, dried her bitter tears and cooled her burning cheeks on the frosty window-pane, and then turned to Magnus. "Good-bye," she said. And their hands enfolded. "Maybe the time will come when you will understand me better. Maybe, one day, you will find out that loveless life is worthless. Maybe, in the end, you will be forced to yield to the all-dominant power of love, and fully acknowledge that without love life is a cemetery and the heart a tomb, and then you will think of me."

At the very parting she asked Magnus to notify her chauffeur of her readiness to go home. She did not re-enter the dance-hall, but proceeded direct to the dressing-room.

For a few moments Magnus remained stationary, pondering on the unusuality of the dying night, and his mind was in chaos. And half staggering, as if inebriated, he entered the dance-hall. Many were in a preparation to go, while several pairs were still dancing at full speed, Thorkell and Alma among the latter. It was the last dance, the last beaker of joy at this ball for the young folks who lived in the sunny side of life, at least, in theirs and other people's fancy.

Magnus mounted the platform. Lady Geraldine Maxwell's chauffeur played a bassoon. Upon notification he laid down the instrument instantly and rushed away. Another member of the orchestra, a 'cellist, rose as Magnus turned to leave, and presented himself cordially.

"My name is Louis Goodwyn."

"My name is Magnus Magnusson," was the answer.

"Well! well!" exclaimed the former, good-naturedly.

And Magnus recognized the winsome stranger that was the first to greet him and his sister in this great land.

"I saw you and recognized you when you entered in company with Mr. Nordland and Miss Hoggart," re-

marked Mr. Goodwyn. "I watched you with pleasure all through the night. I am very much impressed with the great concern Lady Geraldine Maxwell lavished on you. She has politely turned down hundreds of suitors. And several of them are here now. Be sure, everyone was mighty puzzled. And doubtless a good many young men envy you now. Everybody at this ball thought, no doubt, that you were the most fortunate and happy man in the whole world."

But, to Mr. Goodwyn's almost bewildering amazement, Magnus said nothing.

Magnus' new friend inquired minutely about Helga. And when Magnus told him that she had had la grippe, the handsome face of the questioner dimmed. But when he was assured that she had fully recovered, the shroud of sadness vanished from his countenance, as a sheet of mist glides away before the penetrating glance of the noon sun.

Louis Goodwyn explained that he had immigrated from England as a boy, and that all his kin-folks lived over there. He had worked himself upwards to the position of K.C., and was practising law in Winnipeg. Magnus recollected to have seen in the newspapers a recount of a difficult case that the very man that was parleying with him, had defended and won. So he became lively interested when Goodwyn told him that he wanted a law student. And it gladdened him veritably when the lawyer offered him the position.

"I believe you are the right man to look for," he emphasized. "I am going to pay you a living wage from the start. You draw a hundred dollars a month."

The offer was gratefully accepted.

## CHAPTER SIXTEENTH

## HOW MUCH IS SHE WORTH?

We have the pleasure of inducting a character in the personality of Raben, the son of Jim Goldstone. He was a hearty enthusiast for money. He had inherited his father's lust for wealth, but not all his cunning, shrewdness and sagacity. His father was past fifty years of age. He was of a medium stature. His countenance had features that evinced slyness and deceit. He was an enshrined type of up-to-date business-man, a great Christian, you know, supporting the church generously at open meetings, and sometimes leaving a busy desk in order to pilgrimage amongst poor farmers or hard-struggling laborers, collecting funds for the church—a feat which demonstrates his humble disposition. While sacrificing his life for the house of the Lord his transactions of real estate, stocks and bonds ran into millions.

Old-timers claimed that he had immigrated from some far-off country. But his nationality could not very well be identified, as his surname Goldstone is not familiar even to biographers. There was a current gossip about the start of his great fortune. He was said to have landed in some Atlantic port in a bunch of others seeking success in North America. The story goes that he proceeded without delay to Alaska, where some adventurers dug up gold-grains amounting to the value of a thousand dollars a day. But he excavated for weeks without finding any trace of gold in his claim.

An intimacy, enhanced by interests in common, developed between him and two other prospectors who, like himself, had been digging for some time without returns. And at his suggestion they joined hands in stealing gold-dust from other claimants. The theft was conducted in the dead of the long Alaskan winter nights. When enough gold had been deposited in the pits of Jim Goldstone and his co-workers to indicate an artery of the precious metal, a promoter agreed to buy their respective shafts with belonging strata of

gold for the stupendous sum of three hundred thousand dollars. The trio of swindlers hurried for the prairies, and from that hour Jim Goldstone and his co-workers were capitalists.

Despite his proneness for offices of honor and trust, bribes and other such means of commanding wealth had not brought him into any save that he was now in and now out and now in again of the directorate of his professed denomination. He entered into disputes and quarrels with the members of the cliques he patronized. His oligarchic disposition was too autocratic for his fellow-autocrats.

And now let us return to Raben. He had just celebrated the twenty-first birthday of his prosperous life. And one bright Sunday morning he began to canvass in his mind the prospects of young girls of wealth with a view of matrimony. First was a goodly number of matured daughters whose fathers were worth a hundred thousand dollars or so. And after a mere glance he disposed of them all.

Next came several who netted, as he thought, from a hundred thousand to three hundred thousand dollars. Of course there might be mortgages, mechanics' liens or other encumbrances, covering liabilities that he had no idea about. And they, after a rather brief inspection, went down with the others.

Next on the list appeared Alma Hoggart. Her father's wealth was estimated at the rate of half a million dollars. He employed a considerable scrutiny on her. He was conscious of her handsomeness, her jovial temperament, by no means to be shunned, although not the chief qualities, and off she went.

He then turned to John Spears, whose aggregate holdings were claimed to have the value of six hundred thousand dollars or more. He had one marriageable daughter. And naturally she deserved due attention. She was kind of heart, and some asserted that she was solely the daughter of her mother! A peculiar inference, isn't it? Her delicacy and sweetness had upon several occasions attracted his looks and attempered for the moment his selfish thoughts. And now he spent on her half an hour. But then it came up in his unacuminated memory that Mr. Spears owned many children. He really did not know how many, and thus she

became shrouded by mist and haze and glided away altogether.

Eagle Ladell, manufacturer, was valued at eight hundred thousand dollars. He had two daughters ready for the wedlock. And there was the stopping-place for Raben's important search. They were both exceedingly ugly. He shuddered when he thought about their miens. But it was pusillanimity, he deduced, which had to be and was to be duly repressed, as he was to be solely guided by preponderance of their pecuniary standing. He spent more than an hour on this valuable proposition. But, taken all in all, mortgages, overdrafts and the like, they could be worth no more than three hundred thousand dollars apiece. So he finally set them aside, temporarily at least.

Allan Albrecht had to be taken account of, for he was a millionaire. He had a pretty daughter. Raben spent two hours musing on the attractive girl. But he was forced to dismiss her, and off she went with the rest.

It was well-nigh mid-afternoon. The dinner meal thrust itself into his memory. Probably his mother had thought that he was out. And that might have accounted for the failure of the maid-servant to remind him about it. He was loth to lose any meal at all. He enjoyed four big ones a day. And he had an appetite and digestion that could not very well be complained of. But what was an absence from one meal when planning one's destiny! He could eat far more at the 4 o'clock luncheon, and in due time it was ready. And he gulped it like a whale. And with this adage on his lips, "Full stomach solves problems," he hurried to his apartment, where his life-puzzle was soon wrought.

Bright as the morning after a thunderstorm, dainty as the daisy in June, soft as the breeze of spring, she ushered herself into his consciousness. To be sure, she had the charm and beauty of an angel arrayed in flesh. And she was the sole heiress of a million. He stood on the summit of the gloriest of hopes. It paid to think on Sunday!

The Jesuit doctrine that the end justifies the means, was the maxim of this young man. Raben Goldstone was a poltroon. He was timid and shy about female matters and in the presence of women, except those of the reckless and flighty fashion. To seek

aid from his father would avail nothing, as that individual would sooner have gone through all the flames of perdition than have anything to do with Stone Trapson. To solicit the good offices of Eagle Ladell would likewise be futile, as that gentleman was very anxious to marry his own daughters to some wealthy aspirants. He would upon the instant recommend either of his daughters for Raben's hand.

But supper fertilized his wits. There was Anton Silberhaupt, the clever German lawyer, who had immigrated, a boy, and acquired education for his profession in the schools of this country. He was the dean of criminal lawyers. He was a fellow who would do whatever he was asked, providing a swell cash deposit backed it up.

Raben caught the barrister on a crossing of the street leading to the church of each respectively. Raben handed the lawyer a handsome sum, in consideration whereof Mr. Silberhaupt undertook to contract for Violet for him.

Mr. Silberhaupt placidly sat in his magnificent church under the pounding oratory of his pastor, who received the neat sum of ten thousand dollars a year for his services, but who, later, it may well be stated here, becoming tired of the ministry, or perhaps wanting to make more money, went into the real estate business. But the barrister did not hear a word of the sermon. He was pondering on a murder case, in which a millionaire from Eastern Canada was involved; while Goldstone, under the drawling orthodoxy of his clergyman, sat with drooping head, pretending to be absorbed in listening to the gospel of how five loaves and two small fishes sufficed to fill the bellies of five thousand starving people. But he was thinking of how modest he was to be satisfied with a girl of one million, since there were several of those in the city that netted upwards to fifty millions.

After service Mr. Silberhaupt trended for Trapson's mansion. The man and wife were just back from church. Trapson was smoking his grand Habana when Silberhaupt entered the parlor, being ushered in by a footman in becoming uniform. Trapson and his wife welcomed the famous criminal lawyer. Trapson had no fear of him. The real estate magnate knew that he

himself was within the law, like other parasites usually are.

Trapson offered Mr. Silberhaupt a cigar. And when they had spoken as to the weather and the sermons in their churches respectively, which, of course, neither of them knew an iota about, the lawyer remarked:

"How do you like Raben Goldstone?"

"I hear that he is very smart," answered Trapson, moved.

An interim of silence followed. Trapson was thinking how much Jim Goldstone would be worth on his death-bed.

"Is Raben the only heir?" asked Trapson, as if in the spell of a dream.

"No, there are two other claimants."

Then Mr. Silberhaupt opened business.

"I have a significant mission," he said, in a loud, ringing voice.

"Ha—wh—what?" stammered Trapson.

"I have the honor and pleasure of being an appointed intermediary for Raben Goldstone, who asks for your daughter's hand."

"Goldstone! Goldstone!" cried both parents in one breath.

"Yes. Raben Goldstone, that smart young man whose ability to make money is wonderful, desires to marry your daughter." Every word strongly accentuated.

"Whose ability is wonderful to make money, wonderful, desires to marry our daughter; wonderful!" was the confusive reply of both father and mother in one voice.

"I know perfectly well how much his father is worth. His wealth is under-estimated by the public. I am the only one that he has entrusted this fact to. I know that instead of two millions, as people say, he is worth three million dollars."

And the earnestness on the lawyer's countenance was a plain revelation to those he was addressing.

"Worth three millions!" echoed and re-echoed Mr. and Mrs. Trapson.

"And as there are only three heirs, Raben is consequently worth a million."

"Worth a million!" corroborated the union in ringing accents.



"Yes, and as he is worth a million and you a million, it seems to me that there is a reciprocal and equal match in the proposition, or what do you think?" He looked at them alternately.

"Sure, sure. You are right!" And once more they spoke in one voice.

"Nor have I said all," drawled the lawyer. "Besides being an heir of a million and later indubitably more, his private fortune, or what he has made himself, amounts to something in the neighborhood of half a million. And yet he is only twenty-one years." And the ardor as he spoke was genuine.

"Half a million, and only twenty-one years!" exclaimed the man and wife in utter bewilderment.

"I can consider this matter settled, can't I?" said the lawyer, affably.

"Yes, settled. To be sure, settled," answered they both in consonance.

The barrister took up a form required by law for his purpose. He filled it out by the aid of his fountain pen. He handed it to Trapson. "Don't you think it is best to bind the bargain?"

Trapson read the document. He thought briefly. Sure he was only a millionaire while this man was worth a million and a half. He besought the aid of heavenly powers to spare him from any distrust in his spiritual lawyer, and then signed the agreement. His wife signed it without looking at its contents, praising the Lord for the grace He bestowed upon her family.

The lawyer sealed it and then put it in his pocket.

"How happy we are! Ain't we, mam?" sighed Trapson.

"I feel as if young again!" she cried in ecstasy.

"My dear mam," said Trapson, moved, "come and let me kiss you as of old!"

She flung to his embrace, and the aspect amused the lawyer more than any movie could have done.

When he released his twenty-year-old bride from his arms, the lawyer rose and congratulated the enraptured pair for the unusually happy lot for their dear daughter.

Mrs. Trapson rang a bell, and a footman was ordered to bring champagne.

"You take a drink, my dear lawyer, in order to join in

our rejoicing. I always find champagne augments my enjoyment," said Mrs. Trapson.

"Ahem! ahem!" brayed her husband, "I should say so!"

"Yes, I am of the same opinion. 'Good wine gladdens the heart of man,' says the wise Silas," confirmed the lawyer.

The foaming beverage glittered in the gold beakers for mutual luck.

"I s'pose your daughter will quickly agree to this?" said the lawyer, with a **strange**, yet intimate grin.

"She will have to by—unfortunately——"

"Pardon me. But 'unfortunately.' What do you mean by that?"

"It is a secret," sighed Trapson. "But you are our friend, and we do willingly impart to you the heaviest sorrow of mine and my missus' hearts. It is a scandal, scandal!" he thundered ferociously, and his wife's fat bosom heaved and deflated heavily from excitement.

"I am sorry to hear this. But I'll be as silent as the grave," encouraged Mr. Silberhaupt.

"A greasy immigrant allured our daughter. He claims that they are actually betrothed, mind you! I split them apart a short time ago, and she is abstracted ever since, and sobs and wails days and nights. It is terrible! terrible!" he groaned, as he gulped the remainder in his glass.

"Sure it is," remarked the philanthropic lawyer. "But she will recover. Trust God she will recover."

"And he has not a penny, this darned Magnus!" roared Trapson.

"Not a penny," whined his wife.

"Hall Ladell has informed me that this man, who by now has commenced the study of law, is an infidel and a probable anarchist," contributed Mr. Silberhaupt.

"Infidel! anarchist!" snapped Trapson in fierce wrath. "He is an uncivilized beast. He had no right to plead love to my daughter. And they acquainted without our slightest suspicion. He knew the impropriety of his behavior. He should have been aware, and I believe he was aware, that a daughter of a man of a million was not a fit bride for any lousey Tom, Dick or Harry that

might tramp along. I don't think he will ever make a decent, useful lawyer!"

"And my man gave the greasy devil a job and he sneaked our dear Violet out of her sense," supplemented Mrs. Trapson with intense disdain.

"The whole affair is surely deplorable, but let us pray that God will turn it to your advantage and punish the transgressor!" said the lawyer with heat.

They thanked him for his sympathy, and soon they cooled off enough to carry on a lengthy confabulation about Violet's and Raben's proposed union, with all its infinite blessings and happiness according to their opinions.

And for days after this event Mrs. Trapson harped this stanza:

"Blessed be Silberhaupt, my benediction is. Blessed be he for his blessinsful service."

Of course, the rhyme was odd and also the stress. But, as it was her only lyric in all her life, it was naturally exceptional.

Silberhaupt handed Raben the contract of the marriage pledge and received a balance for his service goodly exceeding the amount of the deposit.

A week later Raben went to see his bride-to-be. Mrs. Trapson met him at the door. She looked worn out, and her eyes were inflamed from insomnia. She then told him the sad story. Two nights after the lawyer's visit Violet had spit blood and had a considerable fever. The family physician had been immediately summoned, and upon examination had declared that she had contracted tuberculosis, and advised to have her taken to Ninette Sanatorium without delay. She had gone there to in her mother's charge, who had been back the day before. The principal had given some hopes for recovery, but announced that her confinement would be of a long duration, probably three years.

"But wait, young man. If she lives she will be yours."

Raben Goldstone assured her of his candid and intimate concern in the sad turn of affairs, and proclaimed his willingness to wait an indefinite period of time, if necessary.

And Raben and his mother-in-law-to-be parted with love and trustful prayers to God on their lips.

On the way home Raben Goldstone asked God to spare Violet's life. He painted to the Lord the fact that his loss in Violet's death meant more than her bare self—meant a million dollars.

"Only if she can live, then my ten thousand have not gone as if into the sea. And I will some day inherit a million," were his last words that evening.

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

## LOVE AND REASON

Rapid developments indicated that it was a sad truth, when Lady Geraldine Maxwell declared that in Magnus was her choice of life or death. Such a desperate love as her's is not a common-place one. When love struck her heart it was a death-blow. At parting, when they first met, "her heart beat violently as if to break the walls of her breast." And her life continued to throb akin to surges aroused by rain and storm. The sequences of love in its fullness and sublimity, namely, doubts, fears and flickering hopes overwhelmed her and allowed her no rest. She spent whole days in her rich library, searching for some material that might help to divert her mind. Or she paced her room from nightfall to dawn. And after Magnus' rejection of her appeal of love, she broke completely down. His refusal was her doom of death. She contrived various excuses for not accompanying her parents to theatres or evening parties as usually. And soon the loving eyes of her parents discerned that something ached and ailed her, despite her most earnest effort to conceal the gravity of her condition.

The haggard expression on her countenance, at noon, luncheon, after the Coliseum ball, when she so heroically proposed to Magnus, caused a comment by her parents. "Oh, sweet hope," Sir Maxwell addressed her. "Last night your mother and I were talking about you. We are laden with anxiety. We know now that a misfortune has befallen you."

"A misfortune, misfortune," resounded on her trembling lips.

"Yes, and of a more probable gravity than we dare to admit. You demean very contrary to that of two weeks ago. For the said period you have remained in seclusion, while we tried to cherish theatres and parties in your absence, but which, of course, we could not, as our thoughts abided by you. You, the star of balls and banquets! You retire as if the great repu-

tation of your beauty, learning, and superb mental gifts were all of a sudden being obscured or obliterated. At Drury's Sterling's ball, which was solely set up for you, as you know, we had to answer a great number of calls, unable to locate you. Perhaps you hid somewhere in this house. But why we could not find you we do not know. Likewise at the Mayor's party, we had to explain very elaborately, why you were not with us. At the governor's banquet we were very much humbled. A score of young admirers, all amongst the most wealthy and powerful, including the son of the royal representative himself, crowded about us with such a flood of questions as to make us impatient and perturbed. Of course, we tried to make the best of it."

"You know that persuasions do not move me. I take no fancy in those young men whose hearts are at my feet. I have lived up to your expectations, I hope, without ever giving a false hint. I respect the good qualities of high society. But I have long despised its aggravating degradation."

"True, dear love," answered her father so lovingly. Yours is the choice and **always** shall be. Oh, that you only could be happy!"

"Dear, dear father and mother, I will confide all to you. It is pure. It is love, love that cannot be mastered by death."

"What do we hear?" cried both parents in great anguish. "Oh, dear girl of ours, goddess of our dreams, sunshine of our life, **speak**, speak, tell us, for heaven's sake, tell us, tell us!"

"I love a man who has no money. I love him of all my heart. Since we first met I have thought of him day and night. In him is my choice of death."

In him must be your choice of life. Let him have no pecunious standing. A man that Lady Geraldine Maxwell loves is a man!"

"Yes, he surely is!"

"And you can marry him whenever you choose. I was born into wealth. I have added tenfold to that wealth. I have acquired a little for my family. But your happiness is all I really value."

"But, oh, dear father, he does not love me."

"Does not love you, you. Does not love you,"

groaned Sir Maxwell, overwhelmed with desperation. "He told me the bitter truth. He would not deceive me. He is a gentleman."

Both parents broke down. The pathos of that heart-rending scene would convince many, who worship the Almighty of Gold, that riches fail when life itself is at stake.

"He is my first love. I proposed to him, and I am proud of it."

"Only to be spurned. Lady Geraldine Maxwell proposes and is rejected."

"But, dear parents, this is life."

"But this ought not to be the end of all our hopes. You must win his love. Father and mother will help you."

"Help you or die," echoed the stricken mother.

"But it cannot be done. I have prostrated myself, implored and obtested, but all in vain."

"He shall be won, cost what it may. You must be saved."

"He is a man who knows what he wants or does not want."

"Still our will wins predominate," protested Sir Maxwell desperately.

"What remains is to accept the inevitable." Her emotion breaking forth with such a force as to make both parents gaze at her in awe.

"My money has shattered impediments and oppositions all those years I have been in business. Money shall compel this man to marry you."

"Dear father, dear father," sobbed she, "even that could not help me."

"I will spend every cent sooner than give up."

"Love cannot be bought with gold. Brides and bridegrooms can be bought up with everything that is theirs—except their love."

"I have been watching and waiting for the time when you would take your great affections toward some splendid man. Now that it has occurred, no wonder that its disappointment has rent your heart."

Both parents caressed their only darling with a genuine fervor that is but of the few. Such a heaven of care and affection! And yet she was lonelier than a stray straw in the desert.

"Cheer up, sweet honey. Have faith, precious darling," encouraged Sir Maxwell. "I will talk to this man. What is his name?"

"Magnus Magnusson," she replied. And the mentioning throbbed in her voice.

"I will find out where to find him. I will, I shall persuade him, if it takes me all my life."

The dynamo, that turns the wheels of commerce, politics, and religion, was at her disposal. And she knew it. But she knew equally well that Sir Maxwell's fifty millions could not procure Magnus' love. And resting on a divan in the garden of roses, upon roof of her mansion, and beneath the stars, her reason and love fought the decisive battle of her life. And reason was defeated.

May I be permitted to ask the world, what the reason is? And then again, what a conjugal love is? What have the multitudes to say, whose conjugal love has been a failure? What have the poets to say, the Goethes, the Burns, the Byrons?



## CHAPTER EIGHTEENTH

"IT IS IMPOSSIBLE, SIR MAXWELL; IT IS IMPOSSIBLE"

"I am glad I found you," said Sir Maxwell, as he introduced himself to Magnus, who was extremely busy at his desk, it being near closing time. Magnus pushed a chair towards the magnate. And he sat down. Every movement was heavy, and Magnus observed how dejected and worn-out was the man at whose bid some of the most vital industries would have been paralysed, and whose power was virtually greater than whole legislative bodies.

"It has taken me quite a time to find you," went on Sir Maxwell. "You came to this country but recently. Business-men know very little about your whereabouts. But they soon will know."

"What makes you think that I will acquire distinction?" asked Magnus gladly, despite a gloomy portend as to the visit of the financier.

"It appertains to my position and business, to be able to size up men. You possess every necessary quality for success. It is portrayed in every feature, every move, every word. You art a man of perfect poise."

Silence ensued—unhappy, suspensive. Both were in a deadlock, and they knew it. The learned eyes of the magnate lusted from admiration. How gladly he would have liked to have such a man for a son-in-law!

"I have made arrangements for transferring all my legal transactions from a firm that has represented my interests for over thirty years, the old firm of MacDonough, Hugh, Arskin & Douglass, provided that the firm of Louis Goodwyn will handle it for me hereafter."

Many would have been confounded by this stupendous announcement. But Magnus was not. He had sized up the magnate. And he understood.

"Sir Maxwell," he said coldly, "I expect Mr. Goodwyn here just before we close, and as there are only three minutes till then, you will not have to wait long. Surely

you do not expect a student, that has studied law only two weeks, to have a say in this matter?"

"Were it not for you, I would not be making this offer."

"I hope Mr. Goodwyn will decline the honor and munificence you prefer to bestow on him."

"He cannot very well afford to do that. Besides, you should not be so negative upon this point. I appreciate your independency, but I appreciate practicality in everything still more."

"Practicality is everything," echoed in Magnus' conscious mind. But he said nothing.

An interim. The magnate of the iron will hesitated.

Goodwyn entered. On his heels was a young man with a very agitated look. He was negotiating his divorce. A common dispute, where domestic dissatisfaction centred on mutual blame. But no sooner had the lawyer beheld the industrial king than he was obliged to dismiss the client for a later date. It is hard to describe the position of a professional attorney confronting one that wields a sceptre of wealth. Never did Goodwyn dream to see Sir Maxwell honor him with his presence. The most powerful law firm in Winnipeg had enjoyed his exclusive patronage for many years. And he coming at this hour; What urgency! He became actually dumbfounded.

The lawyer stared at the magnate, speechless, like a child viewing the man in the moon through a strongly magnifying telescope. Sir Maxwell was partly amused, partly sore. He was at all times conscious of his immense power. And, good man as he was, his pride flattered him as he beheld the bewilderment his unexpected appearance had made. But he also had upon the sight of Magnus, realized the inevitable, namely, that all his efforts would fail. And it opened to himself darkness gloomier than death.

But he must try—try again and again—fight to the bitter end for the salvation of his child. It was to do a duty towards himself. His own life was imperilled.

"Well," said Sir Maxwell winsomely, "I desire that you assume the legal duties of my interests."

What was all this? Did he hear right? Or was this all a mockery? No, that could not be. Sir Maxwell was preoccupied in his affairs of stupendous magnitude, and

would thus not be inclined to play a comedy on a struggling, ambitious lawyer. Was he losing his sense, his faculties of sight, hearing and perception? The whole office rocked. He was actually fainting.

Sir Maxwell rose like a flash. He grasped both the lawyer's hands. "Let me felicitate you in your increased capacity. This is all as I have said it. But I can understand that you are astonished."

Goodwyn looked for the first time at Magnus. His amazement was not belittled by his student's apparent composure. "I—I—ca—ca—ca—cannot co—co—come to any bottom in all this!" he stammered.

"No wonder it is a riddle to you. There is, however, one who could explain, but for its incumbent reasons I presume he will not."

"You actually solicit my services. You really intend me to take over the management of your colossal legal affairs," gushed out Goodwyn, in wonderment and anticipation. He was aware that Sir Maxwell's patronage assured him a brilliant success and reputation.

"And so you accept, I reckon," said the good, old financial monarch, smiling faintly.

"Yes, I do accept. And with gratitude. But I feel keenly the weight of my tasks."

"Ah, well, my corporations contest but seldom by litigation. I run my business by principles which elude the enormities of law-suits. I have the repute, without bragging, to accomplish my ends by what is acknowledged as an honest and fair competition. You can amply accommodate my requirements. Your young student here will prove a valuable asset to your own capabilities as a lawyer and a man of affairs," decided Sir Maxwell.

Magnus cast a queer look at the magnate. In it was a mingle of compassion, awe and anger.

The financier alluded to his desire to conduct a private interview with Magnus. A mere vague hint sufficed to make Goodwyn have himself excused, and hurry to his lodgment, to cherish wild dreams of a great fortune.

Fain would Magnus have preferred to have Goodwyn's role in this vortex of happenings. But to induct pretensive evasions was not to be thought of. He, the man of poise, urbanity, broad beneficence to

humanity, must not spare himself, must not flee from a duel by fate decreed, must listen and answer, weigh and speak, must do his best, must be true.

"You are invited to a dinner party next Sunday," said Sir Maxwell, very amiably.

"Thank you," replied Magnus, "but—"

"There is no necessary 'but' about it," interposed Sir Maxwell. "You please come."

"Yes, there is a 'but' about it," emphasized the law student.

The magnate was silent for a few moments. Magnus waited patiently for the unwelcome to come.

"I hope it is convenient for you to come," persisted the man of wealth, gently, fatherly.

"But it is not," retorted Magnus sympathetically, "and not only for myself, but for others."

Sir Maxwell understood only too well. Tears flowed down his face. His lips trembled. "My dear boy," Magnus heard his quivering voice say. "My daughter has confided all to me. She reveres you. And she loves you, yes, she loves you, and so much that she cannot live without you."

"I believe that."

"You believe that," echoed the multi-millionaire despairingly.

"Yes."

"Then, upon her heroic proposal, why did you reject her, spurn her great love?" The diagnostic criterion involved in these words, compounded with abstract amazement and sore suppressed fire.

"I had to," curtly, but sadly, replied Magnus.

"You, you had," half stuttered Sir Maxwell, shaking his head disapprovingly and woefully. "No, my young man, you certainly had not. There is not a lady in this land, that could make such a match, such a charming lovely, beautiful mate as she—as my dear and only Geraldine." His vindication of his great cause flamed with enthusiasm and admiration.

"That is probably true."

"Then where are the reasons for your cruel action," almost demanded Sir Maxwell, in desperation.

"I have no reason. This is probably the only matter when my reason cannot come into play. But still, I know that I am unable to return her love."

"Perhaps you are not as genuinely sentimental as she is. But you cannot help but love her," insisted the unhappy father.

"I assured her, and I assure you that I do not."

"How can that possibly be?" groaned Sir Maxwell in boundless anguish. "Every young man that beholds her, grows fond of her, admires her, worships her, but --but you."

Magnus reviled in his mind the accursed thing called life.

"There is a life or lives in peril. I know that my Geraldine means what she says. She knows what she wants. She has declined a greater number of suitors than any other lady known. And they involve young men of countless opportunities and immense power. But no! She does not love them—unfortunately she does not love any of them. She only loves you, loves you, loves you. And she will die, unless your concern can be won—your love, your love. And if you let her die in the bloom of her life, I and my wife will not stay long behind. We will soon follow. Three lives are at stake. Are you going to assume the responsibility?"

The intenseness of Sir Maxwell's pathos appalled Magnus. His tear-tinged face, considerably writhed from the torments of heart and soul, which expression he however tried with all his will-power to keep in check, infused Magnus' own mighty nervous system with unascribly discomfutable and disconcerting sensations. That he pitied the magnate is too short of account. But that he could not make form to, so much as a fraction of a concrete thought, would approach more its terrible reality. Think of what a momentousness, weightiness and cogency it must have been on his being to find himself submerged in a sea of calamitous suffering of others—suffering unto death, because he had certain irresistible powers of attraction, certain properties, within his sphere of influence, which were working no less havoc than harrowing the welfare of three persons!

"Are you going to balk the issue? Are you going to baffle the question, dodge your part of the liability in this fatal, tragic affair? Are you really going to evade the only true, and only right, and only—so help

me, the heavenly Powers, God Almighty knows it—possible alternative?"

"I have weighed everything to the best of my ability, and my decision is the most just I know," answered Magnus gravely.

"But you will, please, weigh it more," besought the financier.

"Yes. I will promise you that I will weigh it more still. But, most unfortunately, for your daughter and myself, I am afraid my decision cannot change."

"Say there is a hope still! Come to our dinner next Sunday, or whenever you can, at your earliest convenience. Come as often as you have time to. This matter may yet be happily settled," said Sir Maxwell. But his voice did not indicate confidence.

"It is impossible! Sir Maxwell. It is impossible!"

"Some would say," declared Sir Maxwell, and his voice became more and more fluttering with passion, "that it is humbling for me to have to entreat a man to marry my excellent heiress. But it is not humiliating to ask you for her hand."

"You evidently know by this time that I know what I want and what I do not want. I cannot come to any of your dinners, nor at any other time, merely to please you, no matter how fain I would like to do so. I would be only too glad to be with your daughter often, often, because she is the most splendid woman I know. Her marvelous intelligence and education would most certainly induce me to seek her company, if I did not know that it would make matters worse. If she ever invites me I will come. But I know she never will, for it would only make the wounds of her disappointment bleed afresh."

"But you will reason all this better out. Think of what it means to become my son-in-law. Why, with my money you could be a greater benefactor than all humanitarian societies in the world combined. With my money to start with you could become a mightier magnate than Rockefeller, for surely it would be an easy matter for you to manifold my fortune. Just think of it! Think of the happiness in store for you, kind-hearted, benevolent and generous as you undubiously are, if you inherited my holdings. Why, you could hardly give money away as fast as you would make same! But

what is that! A mere trifle it is compared with my lovely Geraldine. With her as a wife, all your life would be one sun-shining day. There would be no winter in your heart. My sweet, lovely Geraldine would make you perfectly happy!" expostulated Sir Maxwell.

Magnus answered in a low, soft voice: "It is impossible, Sir Maxwell. It is impossible."

"You mean that all is hopeless!" groaned Sir Maxwell. And all his frame shook from sensation.

"I mean what I say. Unfortunately, it is impossible, Sir Maxwell. It is impossible!"

## CHAPTER NINETEENTH

## MAGNUS'S CAREER

Louis Goodwyn was not disappointed with Magnus. The latter's assiduity propelled his cause of life onward. Not only did he discharge his duties in the office to the best satisfaction of the most particular persons, but made such rapid strides in the literary technicalities of law as to enable him to represent his employer before the courts, after only eight months' course.

To be sure his advancement was not without self-denials and hard work. His endurance was marvellous.

The thorough knowledge he had acquired in the technics of law was, however, for the most part, a concealment to the already much pleased lawyer. One bright September morn wrought the disclosure.

A haggard-looking middle-aged man, wearing patched clothes, entered the office. He enquired if the lawyer be in. Magnus pointed to his private office. But at that moment Goodwyn happened to exit from his busy den. He walked up to the indigent client and asked pleasantly, "What can I do for you?"

The fortune-deprived individual related to him his trouble.

"Well, my man, I cannot help you. I would very much like to do it though," exclaimed Goodwyn, and there was a tremor of sadness in his voice. "To fight a concern backed up with two million dollars paid-up capital is an utter impossibility for me to tackle. Besides, your case seems to be lacking a number of points that are necessary in a combat against overwhelming money power."

The man shrunk at this discouraging answer. He had been told by a fellow laborer that Goodwyn was the only barrister who would take pity on him, and look into the sort of his plight. Big tears rippled down his weather-beaten cheeks, and the deep fur-



rows of his brow contracted, his eyes dilated, and his lips quivered as he sighed heavily.

"Oh, how helpless I am in a heartless world."

"I would gladly donate my services, and even advance you the necessary expenses of litigating if I could see any possible chance to win the case. And I assure you of my sympathy," said the lawyer firmly.

"Mr. Goodwyn," said Magnus in a strong, steady voice, "I have never asked you a favor. Will you grant me one now?"

"Sure. I will do you any favor possible," answered the attorney in surprise.

"Let me fight for this man before the courts."

Goodwyn hesitated, but only a moment. "Yes, I must, I must let you."

Magnus did not detect the broad, happy smile that played on his employer's lips, as he fondly gazed at a snapshot he held in his hand. Soon it was again in its resting place, his left vest pocket.

"I thank you," said Magnus warmly, and the fervency in his utterances thrilled the generous lawyer with gladness.

The man so bent with despairing agony got eloquent. "You have saved my wife and my children. Since I sustained that injury last year, my family has suffered, debts have piled up and my credits with my grocer and other creditors is gone. Before you said your blessed words, life was hopeless, inextricable difficulty, dire want staring me in the face, charity threatening to be my only refuge. I can never do very hard work again. With compensation, however, I could establish a small business of my own, by means of which I could support my home. And it is your work."

"Too much said in anticipation. I am only a law student yet," said Magnus humorously.

When the laborer was gone, Magnus summed up the case. Surely it was a difficult one; But "where there's a will there's a way." Magnus was determined to have his will prevail.

The contest was terrific. Five skilled advocates arrayed against him. Time after time he had to examine and cross-examine, and argue with trained brains, and not only before the County Court, but also before the Court of King's Bench, and the Court

of Appeal. Several times the case was dismissed, and a score of injunctions made, only to be frustrated, twisted and turned by the manoeuvring technics of Magnus' genius. Of course, Goodwyn, in whose capacity he represented, rendered all possible assistance.

When judgment was finally passed, the client of Magnus received a compensation of five thousand dollars.

Two days later the laborer appeared. He offered to pay a thousand dollars for legal talent rendered him. The lawyer accepted four hundred and fifty dollars to cover costs of court. The remainder he instructed to be forwarded to Magnus. The law student declined any fees for his services and felicitated his client on the happy turn of his fortunes.

The next morning, when Magnus had just seated himself at his desk, a fat, robust man, prosperously attired, entered. Magnus rose and asked politely what he could do for the gentleman.

"I am Leslie Lexter of the International Textile Co., Ltd.," he introduced affably. "You had a tussle against us, and you won. We desire that you represent us in a suit against several combines that together control ten times the capital of ours. Our cause is just, as I admit the one was you fought against us for. If you win, as I believe you will, we will hand you ten thousand dollars. Please accept our trust. We pay all expenses of the prosecution."

Magnus asked for details. The magnate handed him several sealed documents. Magnus glanced over them. Then he mused for a few seconds. The financier appeared agitated and full of suspense. Magnus rose and rang a bell. Goodwyn appeared.

Magnus asked him to investigate Mr. Lexter's papers. "Do you think the case can be won?" he said, simply.

Goodwyn looked them carefully over, and then at the important client. "To tell my honest opinion, I doubt very much the possibility, nay, more, I see, at the moment, no way to win it."

"Well, Mr. Lexter wants me to take the matter up, and I am going to do it if you permit me."

"Sure! sure! But it has come to the point that you should run this office, not I!"

The magnate smiled. "I shall expect you in my

office in half an hour for further details, and that you open proceedings immediately. The five lawyers of my firm—Clinton Abbott, K.C., Reuben Preney, K.C., Gust Leck, K.C., Ellerd Rowning, K.C., and William Strander, K.C.—will, of course, all assist you as well as your employer, Mr. Goodwyn here. But you are the chief counsel." He then departed with a bow.

The struggle was shorter than the former one, for it was settled in the Court of King's Bench. But it exceeded the other in intensity, for Magnus confronted the paid talent of twenty attorneys-at-law, amongst whom were three of the most adroit barristers in the country. Nothing of a cunning, sly and stealthy nature pertaining to the science of law was spared by the magnificent body of counsel placed against him. And the case became a topic of the press all over the land.

The day when Mr. Justice Huran was to decide the issue marked an era in Magnus' biography. The commodious and spacious courtroom was overthronged, all corridors likewise, and many had to be turned away.

The synopsis of the great case administered by the twenty attorneys of the defence consumed all the forenoon and all the afternoon, save half an hour. But that small space of time allotted Magnus sufficed. With unmatched eloquence, skill and accuracy he summed it up in all its main technicalities. Every attendant, including his own advisers as well as his opponents and the presiding judge, listened breathlessly. And at its close you could have heard a pin fall.

For a full minute nothing stirred. Tears streamed down old Judge Huran's face, for he was aware that the greatest lawyer of his own day was in the form of the year's student in front of him.

The opposing lawyers gazed at Magnus with dilated eyes and mouths wide open, and some of them were panting for their breath. Then the whole assemblage burst forth like an avalanche with tremendous cheers. It was evident how affairs had turned.

The speech of the judge before passing judgment was notable. The tribute he paid Magnus annoyed the stars of the law. But deep in the conscience of the selfish money-adorers, the greedy corporation lawyers, was a respect and admiration for the young genius. His will and learning had prevailed.

When he exited the throng was terrible. Everybody desired to shake hands with him and express congratulations upon his great success. And he was greatly relieved when out on the street and under the open sky. His master met him at the exit of the main corridor, and warm was the clasp that Goodwyn greeted his student with.

Two days later Mr. Lexter entered with a big cheque in hand. Goodwyn received it, Magnus being absent. When our hero arrived with a big bunch of documents for new business tendered him, the good lawyer handed him Lexter's cheque for ten thousand dollars.

Magnus was surprised.

"This does not belong to me," he protested gently.

"It does; every cent of it." And thus it had to be.

"Besides," remarked Mr. Goodwyn, "I have arranged for your finale tomorrow."

A week later he was admitted to the bar.

He bought a lovely cottage. His sister became his housekeeper. And Louis Goodwyn, who had invited Magnus to enter a partnership with himself, and who was tired of lodging in dreary down-town hotels, became Magnus' boarder and remained as one of the family.

## CHAPTER TWENTIETH

## WHY IS NATURE HEARTLESS?

Gentle spring! How soothing is the tenderness of thy breeze! How rejuvenating the perfume of thy flowers! How enstrengthening the human spirit, the vivid voices of thy brooks, rivulets and hissing, spouting fountains, freed from the fetters of frost and snow! How cheering the music of thy merry birds! How recuperating and recreating thy soft, azure atmosphere! How luring the creative pulse of nature, that throbs in thy bosom—the very omnipotence of all life!

It is no wonder that all that lives loves thee! That children delight to play and ramble on thy soft lawns, and frolic and prank in thy nestling wreaths; that the old and worn-out seek repose in the shade of the shamrock, to receive thy blessed, breathing cure, animating and relieving; that those who dream of love and yearn for the choice of the heart, seek an interpretation from thy living tongues; that the lonely, friendless and forsaken, who hunger and thirst for love, sympathy and concurrence of emotions, flee into thy compassionate embrace; that seers and sages, who cogitate on things beyond trace of science, endeavor to solve the mysteries, that border the knowable, by the countless, beautiful births that thou bringest forth from inanimate matter.

It is wholly natural that happy united couples cherish to honeymoon in thy orchards and gardens "de luxe," that lovers delight to stroll through the alleys of thy green, glittering forests, that anticipating youths are conjured to thy most sacred and charming beauty-spots, to meet and confess the secret of their hearts.

And by the way! Was it not even rational with the regard of the flower season, heartless, of course, as it may seem, that our noble Lady Maxwell and our clever Magnus Magnusson met face to face on a crosspath at the entrance of the City Park? Their eyes met instantly. The flame of hers, brighter than electric

blaze, more glistening than the most priceless jewels, more fascinating than the spring sun itself. And the sparkles of her love perforated his very self at the focus of the moment. Within him a passion struggled for mastery, demanding that he embrace and press her to his strong heart. But he dared not, must not, for he surely loved another. And her magnetic force prevailed upon him for only a few seconds. Then its response vanished.

Their hands enfolded. In silence they walked side by side through the gate, and sat down on a bench. Neither of them were propense to taciturnity. Yet they were as if mute. For a majority of an hour, no utterance was framed. Of course, her eyes tried to quell a hopeless hunger. But Magnus' gaze, which always was observant, became absorbed by the charm of the roses, and the beauty of the trees, planted there to endear the eye. Orioles and a multitude of other bird musicians entertained. Humanity swayed forth and back. There were laborers' coming and going, and their wives with babies in their arms and a group of children in their wake. Embellished automobiles stopped at the entrance, and childless men wearing frocks, and ladies in gaudy dresses with long silken trains, walked leisurely along, yet obviously with mind and feeling unaffected by the magnificence and pre-eminence of the environment. A group of young men, sportily attired, sauntered on laughingly. They halted to light big cigars, and thereupon laid down on the mellow grass, sipping now and then from pearly flasks, that were reciprocated in a comradé-like fashion. But, as this treating system was illegal, they they naturally kept it from exposition. They discovered vulgarly about the latest and most costly makes of automobiles. One complained that his own car was getting rotten, and that his father was purchasing another for him for five thousand dollars, while another said that he wanted to buy a car for no less than ten thousand dollars, and beat the other all to pieces. A group of young girls were standing nearby. They were dressed in white—as white as new fallen snow.

And as their gowns, with the innocence emblem color, were particularly light, their physical contour came temptingly to view. They cast snapshot glances at the sons of the privileged class. Looks were fre-

quently bartered. And would you think, that the imagination of these females hovered around the charm of a drive into the woodlands—a reckless bumping along the rugged forest trails, or being with boys like these, with pockets stopped with greenbacks, to a show or ball, and take in all the excitement attached to it, including its climax, whatever it might be?

A couple approached. It was Thorkell Nordland and Alma Hoggart. He greeted Magnus with a brisk handshake and bowed to Lady Geraldine Maxwell. And, infatuated as he was in his sweetheart, Lady Maxwell's beauty made him reel. Its effect was always the same, with power like that of a strong wine—the same magnetic influence that beauty invariably has on the poetical heart. Alma was uneasy. They were scheduled for the nearest ice-cream stand.

Next was the procession of the Ladells. With them were their wives respectively. Mr. Hall Ladell's "eye-axe" revolved, now with rapidity, now with spasm. It irritated him grossly to have to lavish so much consideration upon his wife, namely, to take her to the parks Sundays. But he was compelled to do so, to save his repute in the eyes of the world. The beauty of this budding spring-day had no impression on his selfish nature. His mind resided in his liquor saloon, as usual.

But his thoughts diverted quite frequently and stationed, for a while, at a furious campaign which was about to be launched for a national election. He was busily computing the prospective amount of immigrants he would bring with him on his next European trip as Dominion Immigration Authority, provided, of course, that the same party would, at the polls, be returned to power at Ottawa.

Pilatus Ladell was engrossed in his business-province scheduled to be in effect for the next six working days. There were a number of accounts to settle. He was to give vigorous instructions to his collectors. He decided to have a pile of summonses served in cases of defaults and defalcations of remittance.

But the paramount tax imposed upon his brain machinery was the imperative demand for the formulation of original and puissant argumentations to be arrayed as challenges or retorts, as occasion might sanction,

against the ever-increasing force of unsatisfied customers.

In order to maintain, if possible, his brother's interests at maximum expansion, he must stave off aggravating grumble and grudge of the buyers of his products. He took pains to phrase his suggestive arguments in an academic style by using profound expressions which, in part, would admit of understanding of scholarly people. But as Pilatus was not a student of philology, his linguistic manoeuvres did rather depreciate than augment his standing, both as a business-promoter and as a man of literary attainments. People of the so-called cultured class who happened to want a small order did, none the less than the common-sense masses, rather resent or regard it nuisance-like to have to transact as simple a deal by complicated wording and intricate and complex grammarian riddles and controversies.

Sometimes, following his elaborate lexicographical preparations, a proposed deal broke off altogether on account of the inability of the customer to grasp the meaning of Pilatus' sagacious profundity and to reach the altitudes of his winging oratory! The wild gossiping of fraudulent manufacturers derogated, to some extent at least, the trade-mark of the firm. Hence his abstraction at this charming festival of Mother Nature.

Eagle Ladell should have had no worries nor anxiety, or so much is apparent on the surface of it, the supervision of the source that supplied his spendthrift being, as has been explained, almost unreservedly vested in his faithful brother. Yet he was distracted this beautiful Sunday, leaning snugly, as he was, on his wife's ever loyal bosom. He was reflecting on past revels and dreaming of the bewitching enchantments of the flower-gardens inside the parlors of his best female friends, as well as the haunting elegance about the big feasts that he knew were in store for him.

Next was Aaron Hoggart. Glorious, wonderful dreams about city hall and the mayoralty illumined with almost dazzling brilliance the air-castles of his ambition. He travelled in his mind, as he had so often done before, the beautiful road to the greatest dignity he knew on earth. He rushed in with a big plurality as an alderman, was then elected as controller with an astounding



majority, and thereupon ushered into the city hall as mayor by acclamation.

Toryman Nassy loitered a little behind Hoggart. Apartment blocks "fluttu kerlingar" in his head with a great pleasure to him.

Jim Goldstone had managed, despite his business, to jaunt to the park. As he passed, Magnus gazed at the haughty slave of riches with disdain. The head of the financier trended skyward. He could not, on account of his honor and power, humble himself by viewing the charm of the park, because, by so doing, he would have been compelled to encounter faces of human beings. He neither wished to see the big business-men, whom he hated, nor the poor laborers, whom he despised.

Allan Albrecht made his appearance in a bunch of club-goers. Before he left his house he had made a winning suggestion in the form of inducing his wife to invite several ladies to amuse and entertain. Succeeding only too well to elude his faithful wife, he, of course, decided to tarry in the park until dark. He cherished the joy of great achievements. Of but recent date he had completely wrecked the Co-operative Meat Societies along the coasts of the northern lakes.

John Spears entered the park, surrounded by his family. The tar-paper economist had of late devised an artifice of a far greater profitability than his previous economizing consisted of. He sought to employ only immigrants and foreigners, who were ignorant as to remuneration of labor in this land. Their agreement called for pay subject to the value of their labor. But Mr. Spears, paymaster and appraiser combined, discovered upon examination on pay-day that their labor was worth rather little. Of course they left in a body. But other strangers took their places. And Mr. Spears was with great ease of feeling counting his recent bank-deposits.

All this absolutely unnoticed by Lady Geraldine Maxwell. She had seen or felt nothing but Magnus. He now turned to the heavenly beautiful female beside him.

"Lady Maxwell," he began affably, "what do you think of this day?"

"From the point of view of my own position I can say it is cruel. The fascinating splendor of this magnificent spring day, with all exterior nature in rising stages

of blooming, makes such a contrast to the declining, waning stages of certain interior natures." She sighed deeply, heavily.

"Yes, true," he replied. "Notwithstanding the beauty of the flower-season, the pomp and elegance of some men and some things, the significance and marvels of science and art, nature is heartless."

"But why is nature heartless?" And Lady Geraldine Maxwell's natural, insoluble interrogation rang like a billion knells in Magnus' ears.

"Why is nature heartless?" reverberated in his mind, when he was leaving one of the best and noblest women that ever trod on this earth, and of whose embitterness and ruin he was the sole cause, notwithstanding his candor, cautious demeanor and blameless attitude—the attitude that a real gentleman ought to cultivate toward a real lady.

"But why is nature heartless?" In the embrace of sunshine, in a world of joy, in the prime of spring, the cruel truth was proven that nature is heartless. But he was not the instigator! He was not the intriguer! He was not the creator!

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FIRST

## WORLD OF SUFFERING

When Violet arrived at the Ninette Sanatorium she entered a world of suffering. To be sure, the tubercular hospital was equipped with the most modern and efficient accommodation that medical science knows. The principal and his assistants were physicians of eminent achievements. And the nurses were a selected body. Love and devotion to humanity was the outstanding characterization of the institute. Everything was being done to palliate the physical torture of the patients, which in itself was most appalling, yet, as a rule, was always accompanied by mental agony of vaster proportions. But, despite the extenuation and alleviation of human sympathy and care, the bodily and spiritual torments of the dreaded disease were above words. Young men who were stalwart and strong before the consumption attacked them, once thrilling with vitality, hopes and ambition, once fat and muscular, had turned mere skeletons. And their only chance was a slow marring death. Young maidens, some even in their teens, a few weeks before beaming in health and beauty, shining as the roses of June, with large, full, lustrous eyes, and lips that were a true envy of pure, elevated manhood, were now dead-ly pallid and wan, their lips sickly blue, their eyes dull and insunk. A short time before had the castles of their thoughts been adorned with charming hopes and longings of love—the star of life. The star had fallen like a meteor and evanescenced into a seeming Nirvana, whereto their lives were destined to follow. Those who have lost everything that is worth living for, consider the grave an abode of much needed rest. But to those that blossom in the orchard of love and hope, the grave is a dungeon, dark, dreadful and hellish.

Mrs. Trapson escorted her daughter to the asylum, as has been previously stated. Trapson would have liked to accompany her, but he was all-engrossed in big transactions of real estate, and so he did not.

And so absorbed was he in the bustle and vortex of money-making, that he found no time to visit her, except twice during her three years' confinement in Ninette. On the other hand, his wife paid her a visit once a month. But upon every occasion of her departure, Violet uttered a sigh of relief.

You would think that she felt very lonely. But after all it was not much so. Plenty of excellent books were at her disposal. Selected novels and choice dramatic works, together with advanced treatises on life in the form of psychology, sociology and economics, contained the substance of her mental food. And thus she learned to appreciate the invaluable nature of the best of books. A bachelor, who married in the fifth decade of his life, however, used to say, "Good books are the best friends." And surely those that must go through sordid stages without a human friend to quench the hunger of their hearts, will recognize the inestimable value of enlightening literature. And thus it was with Violet. Hours fled into infinity, without her noticing their efflux. The appetite of her mind became as strong as that of Eve's in the antique legend. She learned to eat of the fruits of the tree of knowledge.

Of course, her thoughts were with Magnus first and last. When she awoke she was conscious of him, even before she eyed the first ray of dawning. And the sweet memories of his love stood before at the drowsy tide of eve, and lulled her to sleep.

Sometimes, however, insomnia, the uninvited guest of the unfortunate, kept her in suspense and remorse until morn, all the bitterness of their severance overwhelming her with sad and sombre broodings. But on the whole, her inborn faith—the nurture of her life—that eventually the good would prevail in the ultimate result, calmed her struggling soul and caressed her weary, wounded heart.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-SECOND

## A TRAGIC WEDDING

Violet's blood and nerves became gradually strengthened, which enabled her to overcome the worst stages of her disease. She was allowed to stroll all over the institute, and to take pleasure walks in the spacious garden planted around the big edifice. She became very popular with the other inmates. Many almost worshipped the millionaire's daughter for her simplicity, sympathy and tenderness. For in addition to what good books did in elevating and ennobling her character, the woeful environments left an everlasting imprint on her life. So many heart-rending sights did she see, so many sighs of despair thrilled her heart, so many groans of an immeasurable pain infused her soul as to make her partake of the very atmosphere of the situation. She witnessed a great number of untimely deaths. And the event of one of them we are going to describe in particular. It was that of a beautiful maiden of nineteen summers. She possessed talent and virtues much above the average. Her name was Emily Summerville. She was born and brought up in the district of Baldur. She fell in love with a son of a wealthy farmer. But as her father was only a tenant, not having a claim to a foot of our mother earth, his father, being one of the biggest landholders in Manitoba, opposed emphatically the proposed match. But her heroic sweetheart heeded it not. And all went well for a year. Then the "White Plague" set in. For four years in the sanatorium she switched from twilighted hopes to utter hopelessness. About the end of said period, the soul and body tormenting disease took a decisive trend to her early grave.

Violet entered her chamber early the day she died. Emily's lover, Sam Benson, was there already, holding her neat, wan hand, and gazing unabatingly into her insunk, dull, dry eyes, that once effulged the radiant dawn of his happiness.

"We must part, dear Sam, oh, oh, how terrible, but we must," Emily's trembling lips uttered.

"You won't die. Say, oh say you won't!" protested her lover, as if he were challenging death itself. He flung himself on the floor. He was in pain such as writhed and convulsed all his body. His soul was in disconsolation's deepest depths. After a few moments of all-despairing abandon, he rose, convoking every unit of his will. His omniprecious darling was almost choked from effects of a sensation wrought by his departure from virile placidity. He then made atonement by addressing her with angel-voiced tenderness and with pensive appeal to her for an instant condonement for his unmanly bearing. "O my dear, sweet love. I lost command over myself for the first time in my life. It shall be for the last time too. My destiny is awful, cruel, heartless. But I must bear it. And I shall bear it."

"Dear, dear Sam. Are you ever going to marry?" she almost whispered with great effort.

"Why do you ask now?"

"Because we are now parting at the portals of death. And I always kind of thought that I would always be all to you as you always would be all to me. It may be selfishness, but I would want you to be mine forever as I will always be thine through all eternity. And if there be a life beyond the grave, we would be reunited there for ever, never to part. Our marriage might then be there."

"It has always been your aim, dear Emily, to make me happy. If I could marry for happiness' sake, would not a supposition of that fill your generous soul with happy thoughts?"

"Oh, Sam, my first and only love! I wish that I could die with the thought that I am always going to be your only love, and hold a place in your heart that no other girl ever can. O, dear Sam! do not marry. Promise me that!"

"But I cannot promise that. It is impossible!"

"So love is like my life! It fades away and dies as I. Even that must go with me into the oblivion of death." She lamented heavily, the last tears of her life brimming in her eyes.

Both were silent for a few blinks of time. She gazed

at the opposite wall, as if seeing through it into eternity.

"Why can't you?" she almost gasped.

"Because I am going to ask the artist, Thorkell Nordland, who plays here today for the patients, to play our wedding music. I will also ask Dr. Springfield to act in the capacity of a minister. All with your permission, of course."

"Oh! you are my angel, my saviour, my God!" she ejaculated with the little strength still left.

"And you are my saviour none the less," he corroborated, kissing her faded lips with a genuine fervor, as if she were still the blossoming rose she once was.

"And you are never going to marry again?"

"No, never! I swear with my heart, your memory and all that is holiest in the universe, that you shall be my only love so long as I live. And, yes—longer—forever."

"I die tranquilly, for I have loved and been loved."

"And the memory of your modest, pure and holy love shall be my guide, my protection and my solace to my death."

Emily now noticed Violet's presence. "You will not forget our acquaintance, now that I am going, I'm sure."

"Surely I will never forget you, dear Miss Summerrose. But let us hope. Yet, let us—" Violet could not finish the sentence she had spoken with great haste. The appalling emphasis of doom from the lips of the victim of death filled her subtle soul with boundless grief. Salt tears (and she shed them freely in those days) bathed her hot cheeks.

The bride and bridegroom conversed until noon, with Violet the bridesmaid, as listener. Never had Violet imagined any raptures like those that now vibrated through her sensitive nerves. Never before had her soul been in such existence of wonders and of awe. What a "holy of holies" was love when put to test at the death-bed! And oh! how Violet would fain have suffered had she by so doing been able to bring Emily's health back!

Violet had been sitting in the corner all the forenoon, sighing, weeping, crying, entirely unnoticed by both lovers. Now it was announced that the concert was to

commence. Violet hurried with the nurse to the convocation hall, where all patients able to leave their beds were assembled. A nurse played a harp accompaniment to Thorkell's mellow tunes. All enjoyed it above description. Violet was charmed with the softness, sweetness and melancholy of his melodies. It was as if he played about her love, her pain and her sorrow. There came again "Heaven of the Heart," "The Moment," and her favorite "Rosary." And as she gazed at the artist, his rose-dotted, lean cheeks, his curly black hair and the burning flashes of his eyes, that pierced through his thick glasses, she little dreamed that she was destined to become the mother of his wife. Many years later, when she was rocking her grand-daughter to sleep, she recalled it as something reverent and divine.

The last on his program was his latest composition, his ingenious "Life of Hope," and which later, amongst other great works of his spread his fame all over the earth. His rendition of that masterpiece will be remembered by every listener to his life's end. Every eye was filled with tears and every soul was subjugated by the exaltation of his genius. Yet a certain clique-mob in Winnipeg treated him as an outlaw a short time later, as we shall soon read about.

Silence followed without a stir. Then the door was flung ajar and a nurse shouted excitedly, "Mr. Nordland, for heaven's sake come to No. 53. Your service is earnestly, needfully solicited."

Every word echoed the significance of her mission. Violet, the bridesmaid, Dr. Springfield and the best man, a male patient, followed in the footsteps of the artist.

When they entered the chamber of awe, Thorkell's vision met Emily's dying eyes. He instantly recognized the charming, spirited young daughter of Allen Summerrose, whose hospitality he had bountifully enjoyed while travelling through the district, selling musical instruments, five years before. Deadly pity and grief intensified his most responsive feelings. And seldom, if ever, was he better fit for his sublime task on earth as upon this occasion. And with all the velocity and magnanimity of his soulful thoughts, these stanzas of Steingrímur Thorsteinson rushed through his marvelous brain:



"Eg veit eitt hkjoth heljarthungt  
 Ath hugans orku lamar,  
 Thath helstaf lystur hjartath ungt  
 Og hraedd thath tungan etamar.  
 Thath dauthaklukku gaymur glym  
 Og gnyr sem margra hafa brim  
 Thau domsorth sar meth sorgar ym  
 Thith sjaist aldrei framar.

Astskyldar verur snoggvast sjast  
 Theim sundra nornir gramar  
 Og yndis vonin oll theim brast  
 Ther aldrei vertha samar  
 Hve sart tha slintnar hond fra hond  
 En hafith veglaust skilur ond  
 Thath suthar dimt vith sendna strond  
 Thith sjaist aldrei framar."

It was as if the dying bride perceived or perused what all-dominant despondency was playing rhymes in Thorkell's excited mind. She smiled, cast a quick glance at the artist's lustrous eyes, and then looked fast and with loving fervor into the eyes of her faithful lover, drinking the nectar of everlasting affection, and as if wishing to convey to him the very opposite of Thorkell's religious opinions, namely, a hope, nay, more, a faith in reunion for love-devoted souls, an everlasting life of love of the spirit. "We may meet again," said she as their lips met in the last kiss of her earthly life—a kiss that extended to the verge of life and death.

Thorkell played it through in a manner which befitted admirably the extraordinary environs of the import-bearing function. Dr. Springfield performed the marriage ceremony. They were united forever. Then Thorkell played Chopin's Funeral March. And the echoes of the dying, trembling thrills of that masterly, pathetic and mournful strain followed her spirit into the ever-existing unknown.

She died in her lover's embrace. He pressed a long and infinitely soft and tender kiss on her cold, dead lips as he closed the lashes that hid forever the sweetest and holiest he knew—the mirror of his love's soul.

The lover who had lost all in the pitiless pangs of death—all that was worth anything to the cravings of

his heart, all that could quench the hunger of his lonely soul—was not the only one that wept and lamented.

If ever were serene tears shed it was by all the testators of this tragic wedding--this wedding with dying life. Bright shone the rainbow of hope in their hearts, reaching across the sea of death. Their tears were the dew of compassion and mourning "when love kisses the lips of death."

Thorkell looked at his watch. "I must be going," he said, amid the surges of his sensation. He trembled like a leaf and his face was in a flood of tears. Sam Benson extended him his hand as a token of gratitude. He did not shake. It was as if the strings of emotion had burst as Emily's heart stopped beating.

"I can never pay the debt I owe you. It could not be paid with any money," said he in a very low voice. Then he added with a cadence of sorrow's inspiration, sympathy, and with a genuine fervor, "I believe that your income is scanty. Strange as it seems to me, yet true it is, that young musicians, no matter how clever, have always a hard struggle," he added, handing the artist a hundred dollar banknote.

"This is far, far too much. In fact, I did not intend to charge anything!" exclaimed Thorkell, bewildered by this unexpected, unexperienced-before generosity.

It was as if Benson did not hear Thorkell's harangue. "And if ever I come across your path again," went on the sorrow-stricken man, "I will try to show you that I remember what you have done for me today. I celebrate my marriage only once in my life. And you contributed immensely to make it glorious." His last words were almost inaudible.

They parted in silence. Violet accompanied the artist out of the death-chamber.

"Mr. Nordland, I want to talk to you a few words," she said in a mingle of maiden modesty and grown-up boldness, as he turned to take his leave.

He looked impatiently at his watch again. "Well, I must hasten to catch a train for Winnipeg. I am scheduled to play for the Women's Aid Society. And although donated by me, as my service in this hospital, which in the end, however, was so appreciatively rewarded; although this, like other free services rendered different associations in Winnipeg is sure to be subject

to ungratefulness, I have promised, nevertheless, several solos, and I must keep my promise."

"You know Magnus Magnusson; he is your friend."

"Yes."

"He has become a lawyer of great repute."

"Yes, he holds, as people say, a very enviable position. He is already known all over Canada. He is a genius at law."

"Tell me sincerely"—she looked him full in the face—"do you think he is happy?"

"No, Miss Trapson, he is not."

"I have not heard that he is married." Her voice rang with throbbing suspense.

"Of course he is not."

"But he may be affianced to someone of late. Pardon my inquisitiveness. There was a time when we used to be friends. But friendships decay," she said with pathetic earnestness, and her lips quivered.

"He is engaged, but not of late." Thorkell's voice indicated a keen concern.

"To what girl; oh! to what girl?"

"To you," responded Thorkell as he pressed softly her hand and hurried away. And in her eyes he saw the shining prayers of her love.

"He is engaged to me! he is engaged to me!" she repeated again and again, as she ran up to her room to weep and weep and pray.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-THIRD

## A MARTYR OF OPINION

Professor McFrazier declined in health rapidly. His keen understanding of Thorkell, and his great concern for our hero's future, caused him to make an effort to get a goodly number of wealthy men to assist Thorkell in taking up a study on an extensive scale, the very thing that our martyr-musician needed. For this purpose a conference was called. All the financiers, dealt with in this story, responded. The meeting that was to dispense justice of opinion to Thorkell, was clamorous. Sir Horace Richmouth presided.

Prof. McFrazier was asked to explain the purpose of the meeting. With voice twittering on account of failing heart, and anticipation as to the outcome of this endeavor, this lover of art and humanity demonstrated and proved why the men of wealth in Winnipeg should appreciate Thorkell's position and succor him from the abyss of utter failure. When he finished his plea for Thorkell's aid, a clamorous mingling of approvals and disapprovals showed that his speech had made quite a stir, and, while most of the moneyed men present spoke at once, the hard-expressed words of Eagle Ladell, manufacturer, were heard above the din, when he said: "Me ha, like ha, music ha, all right ha, but me ha, like ha some oter tings ha better ha."

About this time, several prominent men called who were not summoned. A vote was taken, who should be admitted and who should not. Sir Alfa Omega Moses, a Jew of immense power, was immediately admitted. Not so with Siggerleu McWilliams, a free-thinker, a philosopher and a debater. He was voted to stay out. Rev. Arnold Pitt, of the All Souls' Church, managed, despite his unorthodoxical views, to secure a majority of votes and so be admitted. It was a miracle, all right! But it was explained, however, to exist in a natural phenomenon, namely "his connection with Prof. McFrazier, who was the organist in the All Souls' Church. Next entered Brams Benevolence,

a socialist of the very radical type. He did not pose in prominence, at first, because he realized that he had gained admittance by way of some misunderstanding on the part of the lordlings who bossed the meeting. Soon, however, some inquiries came to the chairman, why Mr. Benevolence was there. Sir Richmouth explained that it had been put up to vote, whether Benevolence should be at this meeting or not, and that it had been carried. Needless to say, Benevolence laughed aloud at the whole outfit, to sore mortification of the rich gentlemen assembled, who reviled Sir Richmouth, in their minds, for his blockheadedness and stupidity. And had he not been a multimillionaire, he would most likely have been lynched right there on the spot. But nobody said anything—a due respect for wealth without a soul!

The size of this story admits of but a few glimpses of the proceedings of this meeting. When Sir Richmouth had, by the exercise of his chairmanship, restored the assemblage to full order, by limiting the discussions to one speech at a time, Aaron Hoggart happened to be paying an elaborate eulogy to Prof. McFrazier. But as to the wording about Thorkell, he was very careful, lest he not put himself at some variance to the others. However, he declared his readiness to give something to help Thorkell along, if the others thought him worthy of it. Poor Hoggart! He was looking forth to the next election campaign in the ward, and Thorkell had to be at the mercy of Hoggart's sweet ambition!

Sir Alfa Omega Moses spoke with great kindness about Thorkell. Had he been able to stay throughout the meeting, Thorkell might have carried it. But a special messenger arrived, to inform the magnate that one of his little boys had taken suddenly ill. And Sir Moses left the assemblage immediately, to be as soon as possible at the sick-bed of his lovely boy. Thorkell had been ordered to wait in the lobby until called by the conference. And when Sir Moses passed the musician, on his way out, he handed him a bunch of banknotes, amounting to a hundred dollars. "You have this from me, whether the other fellows do anything or not."

Allan Albrecht said something about co-operation in the meat industry. He declared his willingness to ex-

tend his butcher stores in Winnipeg to prospective investors on a co-operative basis. He derogated the idea to throw out money for a fad of an art on some one that might some day be something. "I am a self-made man," he shouted, "and I believe everybody should get on without collections being taken for his benefit."

Although nobody present desired to experiment on Albrecht's co-operative spirit, they being satisfied with their knowledge of him as a mirror of his past record as an exponent of co-operation, his allusion to the non-necessity of giving a man, experimenting on music, a chance to eat and drink at the expense of their purse, struck the most responsive spot in their persons, and was, perhaps, the turning point in McFrazer's desperate battle to get Thorkell's right for help recognized.

Prof. McFrazer foretasted the culmination of the unhappy trend of the affair. And in order to stave off, if possible, the continuity of unfavorable attitude, he prayed that Thorkell be ordered to demonstrate and prove his worth. Thorkell, overstrung with excitement, entered. His face was intensely flushed. And his whole frame trembled like a leaf. He struck the chords of one of his mightiest of melodies, "The Ode of Heart." Poor Thorkell Nordland! He was impractically imprudent enough to spread pearls for these swine! Miserable martyr of opinion! He half-way hoped that these men, who as we know, appreciated nothing but the music of currency, would now, at last, understand his gift and its usefulness, his aim and the virtue thereof. But surely weeds do not smell the sweet perfume of a budding, red rose!

A murmur went up from mouth to mouth. Some opined that there might be something in it, while others claimed that there was nothing to it, that it were a mere humbug.

Rev. Arnold Pitt rose. "I think this man is a genius. You should put up five thousand dollars at this here meeting, and send him to New York for further study. That is all I have to say." And he sat down.

Sir Horace Richmouth, John Spears, and Stone Trapson declared their willingness to help to see

Thorkell through, provided that the plurality of the gentlemen present favored the scheme.

Dr. Hlandson, Med. and Chir., said that his honest opinion was that Thorkell was a lazy dreamer, an idle hobo. And that the best that could be done would be to jail Thorkell for about six months, to compel him to learn to do his best to work for his living, and get along unassisted. And, as a matter of fact, this statement was a dynamite that exploded the purpose of the meeting. One after another opined his reluctance in the matter, at the same time not failing to flatter Prof. McFrazer for his generous impulse to want to solicit aid for a man on the rocks.

And to cut a miserable story short, the proposition to put up money to help Thorkell along in his study was downed by one vote, Rev. Arnold Pitt having left the meeting in disgust before the vote was taken.

Just before the meeting broke up, Brams Benevolence voiced his opinion about its merit. He declared, amongst other things, "that it had been the greatest scandal in the history of Winnipeg."

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

## THORKELL IS PERSECUTED

McFrazer's failure to secure appreciation and financial aid for Thorkell hastened his end. A few days after the meeting we read about in the last chapter, he took to bed, from which, after but a short confinement, his corpse journeyed in a hearse to the grave. A big crowd attended. All the financiers, prominent in this story, contributed gorgeous wreaths on his tomb. Thorkell dedicated a song to his memory, and played it himself, while the coffin was lowered into the grave. By his death, Thorkell and the world lost a great friend.

"Thad er ekki ein bara stok," says a Norse proverb. Coincident with Thorkell's loss of an ardent and whole-hearted sponsor, the secrecy of his and Alma's love transpired. Loopy, the avaricious money-beast and son of Hall Ladell, had several months prior, made up his mind that he wanted Alma Hoggart and her money. This base character sneaked and spied around her, as a means of preliminary overtures for winning her hand, or more up to the point, get her, no matter what the cost. And it was during the course of this enterprising behavior that he discovered that he had a rival. It may be inferred that Loopy was not taciturn as to the matter. He confided his own desire to his father, who in turn was intensely glad to please his son, "a hverjum hann hafði velthoknun," and resolved to help him to get Alma for his wife.

After lengthy interviews and consultations, as well as deliberations apart, Hall Ladell and Loopy had fabricated enough supply of lies to launch their campaign against Thorkell. It struck like a match would a powder magazine.

Loopy, who fully realized that Alma loathed him, decided not to propose until Thorkell would be out of his way. His decision was sustained by his father. The calumnies employed were both absurd and cruel. The size of this story does not admit of lengthy de-



scription about them. One referred to an alleged misdemeanor in Iceland. And its authority was a foreigner, an imbecile, known as Sera Josua Maelifell. Another was an adducement of a bad conduct of his with Indian squaws, while traversing the wld's of Northern Manitoba in a bunch of surveyors, etc. Scores of stories alleging him to have been consorting with jades came to be in circulation. And as time went on the slander-factory of the Ladells' turned out falsehoods of every description imaginable. Some of these reached Thorkell's ears, and caused him suffering that no words can portray. Meanwhile Magnus did nothing to redress matters, although it would have been easy for him to do so.

In the beginning, Alma tried her best to turn a deaf ear to the aspersions about Thorkell, raining over her head like Manitoba showers. But her inexperience fatalized her noblest resolve. The persistent increase of them caused her to doubt his immunity. And from dubiousity as to his innocence and integrity, she fluttered to a partial belief in them. Of course, her love discounted to a great extent the blemish attached to them. But the venomous germ of suspicion and distrust took root in her heart and began to gnaw the bonds that hitherto had linked them together.

An election campaign was very near. Hoggart's hopes, intensified by his ambition, were in some "Seventy-seventh heaven." He had just, we read, moved into a big mansion, characteristic, for instance, for its high dome. He had relieved an individual of it, who was once in the category of the "mighties." But, when earthly fortune made a successful revolt and dethroned its ruler, he turned to Heaven for business, and became mixed up with missionaries and Bible students.

A surprise party gathered at Hoggart's to congratulate him on his occupancy of the ultra luxurious residence, it containing the "last word" in pomp and finery. The personages paying the honor included the Ladells, John Spears, Edgar Hizzins, Toryman Nassy, Allan Albrecht, Sir Oliver Cleaton, with families, etc. Trapson, Goldstone, Dr. Hlandson & Dr. Bullson did not turn up.

Hall Ladell's "eye-axle" danced a regular fox-trot, when he was cunningly interpolating Thorkell as the

gist of their smooth parley. And he and his dear son Loopy noted with great satisfaction that the stinging arrows of malice in the discourse cut deep into her conscious feeling. She turned pale or flushed in alternation. She took no part in the general discussion, but now and then she had to form a link in the decorum of the gaudy ladies, who flattered her for her beauty and charm. And when Loopy began to play a part in the etiquette, according to the rules his father had taught him, and which he himself had used in his long gone by days of courtship, Alma connived of headache and excused herself. Presently she, in perturbation and uneasiness, took to her room.

Late that evening Thorkell put in his appearance. Alma had been ordered to bed. But despite protests from her father, she went out with him. And while they were strolling, and especially when they parted, he discovered for the first time, that the love he believed she had tendered him, was waning. The cruellest of weapons, slander, had evidently begun to win its might. He pleaded with fervency and emotionalism of a true artist, that she would resist any and every evil motive devised to effect their separation. But her replies were somewhat absent. When he pressed her to his heart she trembled, but her kisses were cold, it seemed to him, and she failed for the most part to respond to the magnetic thrill of his embrace. He invited her to an entertainment the next evening following, which she accepted.

When he was in bed it was discomfortable. He jostled restlessly in it. When at last sleep came it was restless. His dreams were restless. He woke up unusually early, in a bath of sweat. He prepared well for his role on the program of the evening. He purported to win Alma back with the charm of his art. She should find his music still sweeter and more wonderful than ever. But what use was it to fight the greatest power of human society—prejudice? What use was it, under such conditions, to try to build an understanding? Alma could not understand him. Had he only known it!

And readers are invited to divine his disappointment upon her non-appearance at the concert. He declined to join the dance following the program, but lingered around in abstract irresolution. The first

lady choice for partners proved that over twenty girls aspired for his dance. Out of sheer politeness he accepted one of them at random. And it happened to be our Icelandic friend, Miss Ina Orgford.

A few days later he received a telegram from Gillies Thurton, the postmaster at Serown, situated in a fertile rural district. It contained an entreaty to the musician to donate several solos for a concert to be held by a women clique for the benefit of their church out there. Simultaneously a letter arrived, written a day or so before the telegram was sent, stating expressive reasons for the request. Gillies Thurton, who was well-known as a wealthy farmer as well as an usurer, and an extortionate merchant, wrote to Thorkell that the fame of his art had spread out there, also that his benevolence was well-known by people all over. He depicted to the artist that most of the proceeds would, as a matter of fact, go to the needy of his church. Without hesitation, Thorkell selected several excellent pieces, and boarded a train bound for Serown. Little did he suspect that he was hurrying into a dangerous trap!

Gillies Thurton joined him at the station. He drove him in his big Overland automobile to the hall, which he claimed to have built himself, out of charity to society. His assertion, a foregone conclusion, that Thorkell would be on the spot, drew a far greater crowd than ever was known to be there. It realized over five hundred dollars, breaking all records of proceeds of previous entertainments. Folks thanked him, especially the women, with flattery, that characterizes quite many of the fair sex, for his valuable services. And he, with his usual urbanity, partook of the dance, which lasted until two o'clock. Thurton lingered until everybody was gone. Then he locked his own hall with a big key.

Thurton invited Thorkell to go home with him. About three hundred yards from Thurton's residence, while the merchant was travelling very slowly, Thorkell was surprised to find himself in the clutches of prize-fighter Buck Slimon, who had suddenly jumped into the back seat, and also to see Edwin Fox, who was officially known as very religiously inclined, but unofficially a savage beast, take charge of Thurton and politely ask him to step down, walk home and leave

the automobile in his service for the remainder of the night. So far as Thorkell could make out, there had been a pre-arranged plan as to this exchange, thus a complicity on Thurton's part in the foul play that followed.

When Thurton had, without a grumble, vacated, three other thugs boarded the car. One, whom Buck Slimon addressed as Mr. Egleso, seated on the left side of Thorkell, thus stationing the musician between himself and Buck Slimon. The front seat became shared by a fellow, whom Thorkell made out for being a young theological student, called Foly Hlunius, a man, not actually vicious, but could be used for anything coming along, as he was a real stupid-head, bordering on imbecility. But whom the church, always short of priests, hoodwinked into an orthodox seminary, thereby obstructing society to put him in an asylum. In his lap rested Loopy Ladell. And off went the automobile at a terrific speed.

Before Thorkell could introduce inquiries as to what all this was about, Buck Slimon turned to him with a ferocious scowl on his bulldog face, and shook him roughly. Then he unbuttoned his trousers and underwear and flogged him. He repeated this barbaric method of the Dark Ages until the stamina of his strong body was exhausted. Then he handed Thorkell to Mr. Egleso, who was to administer the torture at his choice. "I have done my part, gentlemen. You do yours," panted Buck Slimon. His words were greeted with laughter by every one concerned. Loopy was especially frenzied with jollity. Mr. Egleso stripped his victim of every raiment and held him aloft, as the waning moon now and again drifted into view amidst the bleak, roving clouds. This entertained the company highly, as the car bumped along at a precarious speed, which Thorkell hoped would overturn, and so make a quick end to his torments, even though it would, almost surely, involve his early death. But the automobile did no such thing. Edwin Fox knew how to handle it as well as women, wine and orthodoxy. Next came the dunce, Hlunius. He was at a loss which way to act to the best advantage. Loopy, knowing only too well Thorkell's craving for alcohol, handed Hlunius an empty whisky bottle, and commanded him to thrust its neck into Thorkell's mouth.

Likewise, Mr. Egleso handed him a jug of ice-cold water that had been brought aboard for the purpose. Ilunius was now exhorted by the whole company to mete out to Thorkell a good amount of chill. This Ilunius carried out to the best of his ability. Then he was ordered to throw Thorkel into the air and catch him. And Ilunius, possessing a gigantic bodily strength, as dunces are frequently endowed with, managed to perform this exploit to the full satisfaction of his fellow felons. Next it was agreed on to have Thorkell for a catch between Buck Slimon, Egleso and Ilunius. Like a ball he was flung from one to another with a terrifically jostling force. In this wise they continued until they all three were exhausted. Then Edwin Fox instructed Folly Ilunius to administer Thorkell's preparatory infliction for his doom, by half-strangling him. Ilunius humbly desired an exactitude to be stated. He wanted to be on the sure, as to no less and no more than a half suffocation. This assistance was volunteered by Buck and Egleso, who pressed his fingers to Thorkell's throat, half-way closing his windpipe, causing his breath to be like a half-stifled snort.

At last the most frightful night of Thorkell's life was at an end. Faint gleams of dawning purpled the eastern sky. The automobile slowed down from its awful speed and stopped. Edwin Fox laid his hands on Thorkell for the first time. He tied Thorkell's hands and feet and carried him without a word to a big slough nearby, tied a heavy stone to his neck, and threw him into the marsh. He landed deep in the slimy, dirty, filthy marsh, and sank in the quagmire. In silence the murderers-to-be boarded the automobile, and rushed away at a reckless speed. The villains' maltreatment wrought upon Thorkell, had brought him nearer a state of death than life, even before they threw him into the slough. But when once there, he made a heroic effort to save his life. With, what some would term, a superhuman energy, he managed, submerged as he was, to drag himself so near the bank as to get his head above the water. Then the last ounce of his strength exhausted, and he became unconscious.

The day broadened until it embraced all of sky and

earth. A cart came rattling along the road. Its occupant was a heedful Jew, and as usually, he glanced around as he passed along. A reflective glitter of a peeping sunbeam, the King of Light being just above the horizon, mirrorizing itself in Thorkell's glasses, which were mysteriously preserved and still on his nose, caught the Jew's vigilant eye. He stepped down from his wagon, walked towards the slough to investigate this peculiar phenomenon. Imagine his consternation, when he saw a corpse, for he thought Thorkell dead, half submerged in the swamp! He waded into the morass, and with great difficulty dragged the musician upon the dry bank. "Holy Jehovah! murder, murder!" he exclaimed.

Like any good man, the Jew would cling to a last straw of hope: Thus, he bent down beside the body and sought for the heart. He pressed his ear to Thorkell's breast, and to his great relief, the heart was still beating. "Lord Jehovah be praised!" he exulted triumphantly.

Without a moment's delay the Jew Samaritan lifted Thorkell softly and tenderly into his cart, exhorted his old horse, by snappy lashes of his whip, to run as fast as he could, took a short cut to the nearest town, and entrusted his charge, for convalescence, to the local physician, proffering to pay incurable costs if necessary. It impressed the doctor, who was a kind and sensible man, to see how immensely glad and happy the Jew was for having been fortunate enough to save a human life. "He may be a man of genius," emphasized the Jew as he bid the doctor farewell.

"What makes you think that?" answered the medical man thoughtfully.

"It behooves us Jews to study faces and read characters. Besides, nature endows us abundantly in that respect, and that is why we succeed so well in all our undertakings. I have been in many lands, and have met many men, and this man differs largely from them all. You wait and see, doctor!"

And verily, the physician was to become convinced that the old Jew knew what he was talking about. For two weeks Thorkell's fever approached the death-line. And had it not been for Dr. Forbes's skill and care, he would have died. When, upon Thorkell's re-

covery, the good physician learned who his charge, in whom he had vested a fond liking, was, he recognized that the late Prof. McFrazier had announced his patient, whose life was now saved by himself, as a great rising star. He began to study every feature of Thorkell's face and head. He gazed into his eyes and saw that the sparks and flashes there were a new appearance. During the latter part of the four months of Thorkell's convalescence, he gave the physician's son some lessons, which proved to be of great value to the lad, who himself was destined to be a teacher of violin. And when Dr. Forbes listened to Thorkell play his melodies, that the world was later compelled to acknowledge as everlasting and immortal, he exclaimed, "Surely this man is a genius!"

In his hurry on his perilous trip to Scrown, he forgot to take his violin with him, and was obliged to use one that the women-clique out there provided for him. That is why his dear Amato was spared from ruin, and was his companion all his life.

His first engagement after his ill-fated trip to Scrown, was to play several numbers at a picnic in a town situated on a beach of one of the three great lakes of Northern Manitoba. For clarification it should be stated that Bairn Mairntain Hrof, a wealthy and powerful farmer of the neighborhood, was related to prominent men in Hall Ladell's society. He professed to be an enthusiastic follower of Jesus Christ and His Church, etc. His children were said to be kind of wild characters. Certainly, his son Hredskinn was particularly intolerable for everybody, a nuisance and a menace to the community. He drank rum or whisky day and night, and fought everybody. Bairn Mairntain Hrof was obliged to pay scores of damages to life and property, on account of the unrestrained behavior of his heir. Surely the orthodox father had taught his son some Christianity!

Loopy Ladell bribed Hredskinn Hrof with several cases of three star whisky to work harm upon Thorkell in the event he happened to be out there. During the subsequence of said picnic, the dance, while Thorkell was dancing with the town's fairest of maidens, Hredskinn Mairntain Hrof struck him a violent blow on the head. Thorkell fell as though dead. But within an hour he was returned to consciousness. The

committee of the celebration escorted him, with apologies, to the train. Bairn Mairntain Hrof offered him a cheque as a redress for the blow. But Thorkell refused to have anything to do with it.

And thereafter he stood vigil against recurrences of a similar nature. And oh, how boundlessly cruel life often is! The more he thought about these persecutions, the more he became bewildered as to why they did ever exist. With the eye of a lover, although not with suspicion of jealousy, he had noted of late that Loopy Ladell paid quite a concern to Alma. There might also be others that aspired for her. But why in the world should it demand attempts upon his life? Why were such means resorted to, even though it be rivalry for love? He, whose heart was a heaven of goodness, whose soul was a universe of art, could not imagine that iniquity and villainy could go so far. He had never shown anybody anything but kindness—kindness and evermore kindness. Why all this force of cruelty and evil? Why? Why?



## CHAPTER TWENTY-FIFTH

## COLLISION AND THUNDERBOLT

The Chicago & Northwestern Express sped over the plains of central Wisconsin. Magnus was one of the passengers on the luxurious train. He was on a month's vacation.

A terrific percussion suddenly took place. He got an immediate hold on the edge of his seat. The coach rolled over. None of the occupants of the car in which he rode sustained any considerable injuries. But the instant jar shocked them. And many cried from immense terror. He was immune from even the slightest touch of concussion as he crawled with the others through the open door. He passed along the coach in front of him. A goodly number of people bore quite an extent of the hurt-brunt of the fatal collision. At the end of the car a sight met him that he never forgot. The next one in front of it was utterly demolished. More than half of its passengers were instantly killed, and the rest more or less fearfully maimed and mutilated, when the locomotive of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Express crashed through it at full speed on an intersection of the two roads.

The engineers, conductors and one of the brakemen were arrayed in a group before a small platoon of detectives and a sheriff, who happened to be on the Burlington train. He and his fellow-servants of the law undertook a sort of preliminary inquest on their own initiative. Magnus listened to them for a time. Their testimonies were conflicting. Yet neither engineers nor conductors blamed each other, but maintained that miscarried instructions from superior officers were the source of the accident. The other brakeman was asked for. But as he was soon dug dead from the ruins, no questions were put to him. Magnus saw no end to the dispute and turned his ear away from them. Then his eyes met a woman lying motionless on the ground a few feet from the smashed coach, which was the great "luxus" of the train. Nobody seemed to mind her,

granting perhaps that she was among the departed.

Was he startled? Was he surprised? No. But he knew her instantly. He could not help but recognize her. She was so wonderful, so unique, so divinely exceptional. Everywhere and at all times so. He walked slowly towards her. Her eyes were wide open, staring at the cloudy sky, where strips of serene blue smiled between. When their eyes met hers lusted with brighter silver sheen than any other eyes, and a flood of pure, red, maiden blood effulged her enchanting cheeks. Waves of sensation vibrated on her rosy lips. She jumped to her feet, grasped both his hands and panted with great effort, "Oh, why did we have to meet here?"

"The fault is neither mine nor thine. 'It is nature's fault,' as you once so admirably said. The horrible accident here is accountable for our meeting," he answered with evident commiseration.

"Yes, it is due to the collision. Life is one deadly collision." Her sigh was like a cry actuated by an impending peril. But not a moan of relief after a miraculous escape from the clutches of death itself.

"How did it happen that you are here, instead of being maimed or crushed to death in the ruins of the wrecked train?"

"When the collision took place I was thrown clear through the window and landed here. I did not lose consciousness. But the force of the throw shocked me somewhat. I felt dazed, and dark, fleecy threads span webs before my eyes. There was a loud ringing in my ears, like that of a deathknell. But unfortunately it was not the knell of my funeral. The shock seems to be now a matter of the past," she replied, still fondling his hands with magnetic heat.

Magnus' situation was trying. It is painful to be the cause of other people's ruin against one's own intent.

"I was at the deathbed of my aunt in Chicago," went on she. "She wrote us that she could not die in peace unless she did behold me once more. She loved me so dearly. This is my only trip in three years. When her dear spirit winged away to the unexplored, she whispered as her lips closed never to breathe forth a word again, 'We'll soon meet again.'"

"You do not believe that a prophecy," hinted Magnus sadly.

"I know, I know that my torture will soon terminate," she answered eagerly.

"Are you injured?"

"Not bodily so far as I can perceive. Only my soul is aching."

"We can in a short while start afresh for Minneapolis. The relief train will soon be here," said Magnus, as they began to walk to and fro. Their colloquy was lively and unrestrained, altogether distant from the turbulent and restless waves of her mind and her heart, and the uncomfortable and uncompromising situation in which he found himself in this cruelly sarcastical romance played by Old Lady Nature.

At a point of comity they kept up company throughout the remainder of the journey to Winnipeg.

While in Minneapolis, Magnus collided with Buck Slimon on one of the principal thoroughfares.

"Can't you keep out of my way?" snapped the prize-fighter fiercely.

"Well, I have as much right to the sidewalk as you, haven't I?"

"I am famous all over America. I don't tolerate any jostling or tampering. And I usually have my way, you shall know. You are the first man here in Minneapolis to have the impudence to run into me."

Magnus looked at his watch. "It is full time for me to go to my hotel. But I want to let you know that I am not afraid of you."

Buck Slimon scowled ferociously. "So you are not? Did I hear right, eh?"

"Yes, you-did. Likewise, if you don't I will arrange for a meeting how and where you surely do not prefer."

Two policemen had stopped on their beat nearby and began to listen. Buck Slimon noticed that. Without answering he strutted away in cowardly wrath to a late-hour saloon, where he was to prepare for his accustomed all-night debauch.

And in her boudoirs in Minneapolis' grandest hotel, Lady Maxwell reclined without comfort on the silken lounge, reciting to herself the most beautiful of Italian airs.

A few weeks later a severe thunderstorm visited Winnipeg. The lightnings leaped from cloud to cloud, but

else the heavens were as black as tar, although the day was high in the sky. Magnus was locking his big safe, it being closing hour. His employees rushed away buried in their waterproofs. They had an anxious time to catch the overcrowded street cars. Nature's furious demonstration did not, however, disturb Magnus. His business was as enormous as ever. And he was deeply musing on a case coming up in court the following day, as he walked down the stairway. He took brisk strides across the sidewalk to his big automobile. When he touched the self-starter, a terrific roaring crash notified him that a shaft of lightning had struck a few yards away. Simultaneously he heard cried by pedestrians running for their lives, "A woman killed by thunder-bolt!"

He jumped out of the snug automotive vehicle. Through the thick of the rain he eyed the prostrate form. "Oh! angel Geraldine!" burst half-smothered from his lips.

A physician in the process of closing his office heard the shout about a dead woman. He hastened to the scene, and was there in the same instant as Magnus.

"She is dead, I am afraid!" he ejaculated excitedly. He was a great lover of women. In his heart he tendered an immediate affection for the deadlly pallid bella donna.

"If you permit me, I will carry her to your office and we will see what can be done," entreated Magnus gravely.

"That was just what I was going to suggest," approved the doctor eagerly.

Magnus lifted her up tenderly. And he could not refrain from viewing her pale countenance. He could not imagine such charm to adorn any other face, even now, when death seemed to have put its signet upon it. And once more the question rang in his mind, "Why not love this instead of the other?"

He placed his charge softly on a sofa in the physician's consulting room.

The medical man felt for her heart. It did still beat, but its pulsation was weak and irregular. He went into a side room for a bottle of brandy, by the aid of which he purported to revive her.

A violent spasm seized Magnus, a one with hurri-

cane's suddenness, absolutely overwhelming and irresistible for this man of gigantic volition. He loved her, it seemed to him, even unto death. With almost frantic wildness, with trembling ecstasy, in fierce overjoy, a characteristic absolutely running riot with his usual temper, he pressed her with all his force to his heart, and kissed her many kisses in succession.

Poor Geraldine! She awoke back to life in her lover's embrace, only to find it an unnatural, inexplicable event, a something perhaps not of this world.

"Oh, God in heaven! Magnus! Magnus!"

But then he saw, with indescribable remorse, his mistake. He was completely bewildered. What had all this been about? But one thing he was sure of—it had been a fond something. He had been in a heaven of bliss. But it had only been a few moments. The unseen, incomprehensible tempest called love had struck him for only a few blinks of an eye. Why had it not come before? Who can answer the eternal question? But the sad truth remained, that this tragic occurrence had furnished propitious means to facilitate the subtle entwines of two souls to interlock. But never before! And never again!

## CHAPTER TWENTY-SIXTH

## THE GENIUS IS JAILED

Alcohol spreads horror, destruction and death. It ruins the homes of its victims. It engenders self-abandon, sin and misery. It turns prosperity to indigence, happiness to despair, love and peace to dissension and strife. It carries disease into every organ of the body, hardens the heart and pollutes the soul. It has helped to fill our dungeons with felons and our asylums with lunatics. At its command, helpless wives have wept and hungry children cried. And the gay saloonkeeper has taken all the money and then whipped the drunkard out of the barroom, leaving him to his fate in the slums!

There are prohibitory laws covering almost the whole of North America, except Mexico. May it convert the whole of the people to real prohibition—a prohibition lasting through all ages.

Prize-fighter Buck Slimon was jaunting in the United States for a half railroad fare, filling engagements in various towns and small-sized cities for his bulldog contests. Edwin Fox was with him. These persons were, as has been related, Hall Ladell's and his son's "aides-de-camp" in persecuting Thorkell Nordland. And now father and son, who were so much blessed by the exuberance their real God John Barleycorn amassed for them, missed very much these odious debauchers. But, desirous at heart to get Thorkell as quickly out of the way as possible, whereby to hasten all he could the union of Alma and his dear son Loopy, Hall Ladell made several attempts in secret to bribe down-and-out drunkards who frequented his saloon, to injure Thorkell as seriously as admitted of a safe escape from the law. But, thanks to their inner nature, despite their fall, they declined in their own terminological style, "to have anything to do with the damned business."

Loopy Ladell was truly lascivious and cruel, but he lacked most of the shrewdness and treachery of his father. So the latter had now, as before, to do all the thinking in the matter. And whosoever took the

trouble to observe Hall's "eye-axe" could have easily inferred from its record-breaking motions that something like an almost unprecedented deducement was evolving in his head. And so it was. He stole one afternoon away while his bartenders were engrossed in preparing the saloon for the evening crowd, which almost never failed to be on the spot. He solemnly entered the offices of Dr. Med. & Chir. Hlandson and his partner, Dr. Bullson. Dr. Bullson was not of an exceptional value as a medical man, but Dr. Hlandson was very successful in his profession but erratic outside of that province.

A great number of sick and suffering people wanting to consult these well-known physicians, especially Dr. Med. & Chir. Hlandson, packed the spacious waiting-rooms. Dr. Bullson left for home while there were still half a dozen waiting their turn to get medical aid from his partner. But Hall waited with his "eye-axe" on a frightful speed until Dr. Hlandson had rendered his many patients scrupulous service, as usually, and Hall and the physician were but two of them. But to Hall's great surprise, his immense power could not move Dr. Hlandson, thanks to his integrity, to accede to his request, whereupon Wine-Merchant Ladell's face became black with wrath and fury.

"I believe, as I have said before," emphasized Dr. Hlandson, "that Thorkell Nordland should be six months or so in jail, in order to learn to work for his living and become a man. He is but an idle dreamer, a lazy hobo; that is what is wrong with him. And if you can prefer a charge against him of that sort, I will substantiate it to the best of my ability, for that is my sincere opinion. But on the ground you propose I refuse to have anything to do with it."

Hall Ladell then vociferated, his voice thick and shaking with anger: "You have been my family physician for many years. I relieve you of that service in the future. You choose to resist my will. Well and good! I shall treat you as an enemy from now on. But remember, if you seek political honors in this part of the country, you may find out what it means for you to have me and my saloon against you."

Dr. Hlandson, filled with horror and disdain, did not answer. And, while he busied himself in preparing

several important surgical apparatuses, Hall Ladell strutted away without bidding adieu, and swung stealthily into Dr. Bullson's empty office, and in frock coat and with derby on his head, crouched with tiger-agility and circus-nimbleness under the sofa and lay there without stir. All this took place in a mighty quiet fashion, and was quite unobserved by Dr. Hlandson, who hurried away to the hospital, where he would be busily engaged until midnight.

Past midnight, Hall Ladell emerged from his hiding-place, and his "eye-axe" accompanied his careful and quiet movements. He entered Dr. Hlandson's office, pulled down the blind, switched on the light and began to search Dr. Hlandson's medical library. It took him two hours to find out what he wanted. And then he opened with his pincers the door of the auxiliary apothec with the same composure as if he were opening a case of whisky, and removed therefrom a glass containing the desired liquid. "Bravo!" he thought. "According to description it will only make him sick, not kill him. But if—yes, if— Well I am safe anyway. I am a millionaire, millionaire—"

The following evening a concert was held for charitable purposes. Thorkell donated, once more, several of his best solos. He was aware, of course, that the "big" ladies who bossed the enterprise and who belonged to solid cliques, were seeking his service to insure a good crowd, and that, despite his contributions to scores of charity entertainments, conducted by Woman's Aid Societies, the very women of these associated help-clubs condemned him the severest for his drunkenness and his failure to businessize his capacity, and with ardor and zeal consigned him to the lowest depths of good-for nothingness.

Even the most hard-up-against-it and the most down-and-out of the masses managed to scramble through with the price for a ticket of admission for these concerts, because same cost much less than theatre or opera-going. And that is why Thorkell was especially motivated at the pure command of his innate disposition to play numbers of the varied programs, because by so doing he could caress stray, friendless lives, who took his music far more to heart than the "happy" folks. And now, at this particular entertainment, the house



was over-thronged. Never before had Thorkell tried with more enthusiasm to attain the impossible, namely, Alma's understanding.

To be sure, pride shone in Alma's eyes. But deeper it could not reach, no matter how much Thorkell's heart prayed and his soul importuned.

Balls always accompanied these concerts. From a point of courtesy, Thorkell was entertained to lead the first dance. In tension of a subtle sensation he turned to Alma, who happened to sit beside Loopy Ladell. He had half won a promise of her for it. But Thorkell could show the young capitalist and the other folks of caste that his was the choice despite everything. Loopy felt for her gown. But with an irate glitter in her eyes she demanded that he better leave her alone. And she and the artist led the tide in a mighty waltz, intensified by a strong orchestra.

While the dancing was still at its height, Thorkell suggested to Alma that they should take a walk out in the open, with the night as a silent witness. During their walk they talked about their affair more earnestly than before. Alma did not, however, tell him, although it would have afforded a clue to him, that Loopy Ladell showed more and more concern for her—a concern that could not be mistaken even by an inexperienced girl. But she did tell him that the many bad stories she had heard about him had caused her anxiety and pain, and filled her thoughts with broodings of doubt and suspicion. Of course, she did not know whence they came, nor why they were so much aloft. But why did they exist? Could they all be a fabrication of malice and rancor?

Thorkell thought, the while, about the attempts made upon his limbs and life. But he could not clarify, even to himself, why and how they originated. But without a doubt, a fierce jealousy was working harm upon, trying to destroy him. An iniquitous snake was coiling, concealed from all light. Who was he? The dreamer, whose mind was always dwelling far from life's lurid complications, could not surmise, could not deduce, could not find the faintest sign of the cause of his precarious situation.

And he assured Alma of his innocence with candor that she, at that moment, could not doubt—thank Hea-

ven, that truth is sometimes received! And in an instant spell of all-embracing ecstasy she said that she would marry him within a week, although he had never gone so far in his wooing as a word of wedlock. And he doubted what his ears did hear. Or why should he not?

"If nothing really bad happens to your person, if nothing really awful comes along in the meantime, to tarnish or stain your repute," she emphasized.

He felt queer. And her words sounded to him from afar. And when she whispered into his ear, "I'll marry you secretly," her utterances seemed to echo from a long distance.

And what she had to say about their fate—welcoming tidings as it may seem—did not fill his heart with much joy after all. It came about so unexpectedly. But, of course, it was lovely to hear how brave she was. Yet it was mortifying that she was held to be so much above him that they would have to join in matrimony in concealment, as if they were doing something that they had to be ashamed of. Yes, because Hoggart owned half a million dollars she was in the eyes of the world worth that much more than himself. And hence, of course, he was worth nothing. A true North American sentiment! But he loved her. Did he not? And he pressed her to his breast.

And the longest embrace and the longest kiss of their love-life marked their parting.

It did not occur to Thorkell that anything really bad might happen to himself in the meantime. Least of all that a liquid in Hall Ladell's saloon would do it. He did not see anything but bright ahead. Yet he was uneasy? But why. And he continued his walking, sometimes in a slow wise, but sometimes he actually ran. There was, somewhere, something dreadful, it seemed to him, but he did not know where. Something claimed aid or pity on his part. Was it a presage, a precursor of warning, an uninterpretable message from the incomprehensible in boundless cosmos? Was it a cry about something woeful, something dreadful, something irreparable about to happen? He thought himself not superstitious. And nothing was said by the voice of the night. It had no soul, no life, no feeling. Or had

it? He did not believe that any spirits traversed in the oneness and the darkness.

All of a sudden he turned his walk to Magnus' residence. The lawyer was preparing a gigantic case and working the whole twenty-four hours at that time. Thorkell told Magnus with alacrity that Alma had promised to marry him within a week providing——

"Providing what?" interposed Magnus quickly.

"That nothing very bad happens to my person in the meanwhile, such as fresh, very cruel aspersion, something that taints me still blacker in the eyes of the world."

"I see," mused Magnus.

"And I hope that nothing such happens."

"I certainly hope for the contrary," said Magnus. Low, as if to himself.

"What!" almost cried Thorkell. He was not sure though that he had heard aright.

"Ah, well, I don't mean that I hope for anything to happen to you that might endanger or undermine your future. But something might happen that would do you very much good. And that is what I do hope for. Perhaps you will understand later on what I do mean."

Thorkell gazed at him in bewilderment.

Magnus offered the musician a cigar.

But the uneasiness overtook Thorkell again. He could not sit still. And he began to chafe the floor. And presently he took his leave.

He trended his way towards his place of lodgment. He went along the well-known street at a slow pace. He was well nigh calm. But then, all of a sudden he grew mighty restless for the third time this night. He began to run as fast as his feet could carry him. He was fleeing from his fear, his terror of something—the something that might happen in the memorable "meantime." He stopped abruptly. What was this? Before him stood Alma, holding out her hand in silent warning. Between them was a barrel of cognac. It was as if she wished to say: "Do not touch it!" But the temptation for bracing himself up was irresistible. He bent down to drink. Then the barrel sank. Alma fell into it. The earth opened. And he saw Alma in what resembled a deep pit. And the earth closed over her.

In the forenoon, a couple of days later, Thorkell entered Hall Ladell's saloon. He was haggard and despondent. Hall offered him a free drink. And he was very winsome and affable. Thorkell began to think how kind Ladell was after all to donate a drink to himself, so thirsty and needy for stimulant. Mr. Ladell poured into Thorkell's glass some liquid from a bottle of cognac which he had admixed with the stolen poison. Our violinist gulped three drinks in succession, Hall urging him to take a due advantage of his hospitality.

Then Thorkell, all of a sudden, took sick and was obliged to lie down on a bench. Both Hall Ladell's brothers were drinking there. And the manufacturer undertook to draw attention to Thorkell's helpless condition. Look—ha—at the beast—ha!" he shouted. "He hought—ha—to be in te clink—ha. 'Tis shame—ha—tat te bawdy fool—ha—is in tis here lobely place—ha."

"That is right," corroborated Pilatus.

"I will phone for the police," roared Hall. "This scavenger, this dirty swine, was in one of the bunches I brought from Europe."

"The jail is the right place for him," rang in laughing chorus all the mighty Ladells.

"My broter—ha—does—ha—a clin bisnis of hit—ha. My broter—ha—is lobely—ha. Long, long lib my broter—ha" Eagle Ladell made this remark, when two constables entered. The Three Star whisky seemed to agree excellently with his temperance taste, as usually.

"I am only sick, not intoxicated this time," said Thorkell with effort.

"I believe this man should not be handled in any wise roughly," commented Constable Brass.

"Maybe that is the case," echoed the other.

"If you don't get this devil to the Central Police Station quick, we will see to it that you are discharged," unisoned the foul Ladells.

"It is a shame to imprison this man. He is a poet, a musician, a genius," ventured Brass. At one of the big concerts of the Women's Aid Society he had listened to the dominant charm of Thorkell's violin, and read several of his lyrics in the papers. He did feel, although he was a policeman.

"Yes, I agree with you," said his pal, who always was of the same opinion as all other people.

"Unless you hurry with this swine from this reputable place, we will have you yourselves arrested," thundered all the cruel, powerful Ladells.

"I guess we must arrest him," sighed Brass.

"I guess so," agreed the other.

And they drew him to the police headquarters.

Nobody knew the truth. Thorkell did not know how and why he took sick so suddenly. The police, in good faith, supposed him to be drunk. They were free from all blame in this miserable matter.

Thorkell could not pay his fine. And nobody came to pay it for him. Magnus, who would have done so, was away from the city. And Thorkell had to languish ten days in jail for no crime!

## CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVENTH

HOGGART'S PLEDGE AND THE SUPREME  
EFFORT OF EVIL WITH AFTERMATH

The very same day that Thorkell Nordland was jailed, Aaron Hoggart captured his candidacy for aldermanic honors in his ward. In the immediate subsequence he issued a manifesto containing three planks, namely: 1. That he would, if elected, fight against any attempt that might be made to legalize taxation of church property. 2. That he would fight, if elected, against the idea of a single tax if attempted for introduction. 3. That he would fight, if elected, against any and every attempt on the part of temperance people to restrict or do away with the sale or manufacture of intoxicants. Although there were but stray voices here and there clamoring for taxation on church property, the adoption of single tax and the abolition of the bar, Hoggart's timely forewarning in his manifesto stirred those against these changes involved to put themselves the more on the alert. And it lined up to his cause the sympathies of the orthodox clergymen and their sponsors, the big landowners, and the liquor traffic corporations, and the saloon-keepers.

When Hoggart's campaign was well under way, Trapson and Dr. Hlandson came into the field. Dr. Hlandson made no specific promises, but declared that he would, if elected, serve the people to the best of his ability. Trapson, on the other hand, promised all sorts of good things for the people, if returned at the polls.

The fact that Trapson would most likely use bribes, as he did in his successful campaign as related in chapter fourth of our story, did not worry Hoggart as much as Dr. Hlandson's candidacy. The physician was very popular because he was lenient when rendering medical service to people of scanty means, and because he was, as has been stated, very successful in his profession. And the more Hoggart canvassed and tested his own following, the better did he find out that Dr. Hlandson's popularity was a rival to be ser-

iously reckoned with. Hoggart concluded that although the clergy, the big landowners, and the liquor interests did tell the people to vote for himself, and perhaps a few of them might advise Trapson, the helpful deeds of Dr. Hlandson had such a hold on the conscious attitude of the masses as to ensure his election, unless desperate means were resorted to.

And Hoggart was absolutely determined to carry the election. He was almost an abstainer from alcohol. He was very seldom found in a bar-room. But after two sleepless nights, caused by his anxiety about the election, he made, what can be almost said, an exception from the rule; and walked, late in the forenoon, to Hall Ladell's wine parlors. The proprietor tended on him in person, the only drink he ordered being a glass of light beer. And Hall's "eye-axle" the while, came near to be divine in its solemn motions.

"What is your opinion about the outcome of the election?" asked Hoggart, as he put on the counter a dime, the price of his only drink.

"The most worthy candidate will win." And the famous "eye-axle" accentuated this statement with a wonderful demonstration.

Hoggart had no doubt that he himself was the worthy candidate. The other two had no worth at all as civic diplomats, in his estimation.

"I should be only too glad if you would explain yourself a little more," said Hoggart, looking at Hall with friendly eyes.

"Were not my words plain enough?" And all Hall's face, including his "eye-axle," was flooded with joy.

"Ha, ha, sure!" laughed Hoggart. "You are, of course, talking with that very candidate."

"It all depends," he began his answer, but did not go on, as was his very plan.

"It all depends, did you say? Of course, everything depends on something. Trapson is, of course, not much in my way, but Dr. Hlandson is a dangerous rival," said Hoggart, with evident anxiety.

"The clergy, the big landowners, and the liquor interests are with you. You should not worry." But Hall's "eye-axle" said something different. That much was fully revealed to Hoggart.

"But I am not sure of being elected, notwithstanding."

"It should be enough," said Hall, with a strong tone of disbelief in his voice.

"But it is not, and you know it as well as I do," and Hoggart stared at the wine merchant in anticipation.

"Well," drawled Hall, but his "eye-axle" went on a terrific speed. "I know of only one thing that is sure to win it."

"What is it?"

"My whisky."

"How much will it take to get that thing going. How many thousands, for instance," asked Hoggart excitedly.

"Not a cent." And Hall's voice was very calm. But his "eye-axle" did not slow up.

"What fun are you driving at?" And Hoggart got a little sore.

"It is no fun. It is very earnest on my part. I just make the condition that you persuade your daughter to consent to marry my son."

Hoggart pondered deeply. He, of course, intended that she should marry a man that could take good care of her. And Loopy was such a man. But he hated to force her to marry anybody.

"He loves her. He must get her. You could not get a smarter son-in-law. He is clever to make money."

Hoggart admitted all this. "I want to please you. I surely need your co-operation," said he. "I consider it a great boon for me if such a match can be worked out. I will win her approval or else (and here he hesitated), compel her to wed your son." Hoggart was in an awful excitement. He had not much faith in the Ladells, and did not consider Loopy as a "smart set" for an son-in-law. But he could not wait for the aldermanic honors. It was impossible. Hence he had to pledge his only child, barter his only heir.

The size of this story does not admit of detailed account of Hall's enthronement of Hoggart in the aldermanic seat. Suffice it is to say that he virtually turned the ward into a lake of whisky. The deluge reached its climax on election eve. Never before, nor after, has there been such enormity of whisky in the ward. The general meeting on election eve ended in commotion. Hoggart made a long speech, without



much interruption. But Trapson's address, namely, Sir Richmouth's old campaign speech, became entangled in heckling and the like. Dr. Hlandson was downed by a terrible heckling and clamor that ended in ovations and bravos for Hoggart. Truly Hall Ladell's whisky won the day for Hoggart. But he was elected by only three votes majority over Dr. Hlandson, and ten over Trapson.

Hoggart reasoned with his daughter to leave Thorkell to his painting, to his imprisonment, and scores of other black spots on his person. And after his life's hardest effort to convince and convert, he succeeded to persuade Alma to give up Thorkell, at least, for a time. Simultaneously he informed, with strong argument, that Loopy Ladell was an enthusiastic candidate for her hand. But she retorted that she loathed and even detested Loopy, that he was dog-like, with hanging head, and that there was no man to him. Hoggart did not press Loopy's suit very hard this time. He approached his daughter about it, but he was repeating it again, and again, to a sore annoyance for her.

When Thorkell's ten days of incarceration ended—ten days that were to him a whole eternity—he found, upon his re-appearance into freedom, that Alma was his no more. It took him a week to get a chance to talk to her. And then she told him that he had himself to blame, that since he loved her, he should have stopped the use of intoxicants long before drunkenness went so far as to drag him into prison. "You could have spared me the shame, to drink yourself into jail," she cried. "I have done my best to disbelieve the many, many bad stories circulated about you. But a man that is jailed for drunkenness and disorder can be believed to do almost anything." So that was her conclusion about the drunkard, Thorkell Nordland. She could not see the artist, the genius, Thorkell Nordland. And Thorkell gave vent to abandonment. He became an actual tramp, hoboeing from saloon to saloon, bumming "treats" from morning to night. His was starvation. For weeks he lived virtually on the street.

And on went time. It does not wait for anybody. Loopy Ladell did not move nearer his goal. And Hall, his hot-loving father, decided that it would be worth

experimenting to get Thorkell out of the way for good, and for sure. He went to visit Buck Slimon and Edwin Fox in their lair of vice. They had just arrived from their excursion in the United States. When their dear visitor put in his appearance, a bottle of champagne was quickly opened, and the trinity sat down around a small table, and began to drink with brotherly affability. After they had exchanged a few unimportant remarks, Hall Ladell rose and pronounced solemnly: "Thorkell Nordland must be killed."

"What can I expect for my part, if I assist in doing the job," answered Buck Slimon with the same equanimity as if he were opening a bottle of three star whisky.

"Name your price," said Hall calmly. And his "eye-axle" showed great concern.

"It is not particularly pleasant to journey into the gallows, I'll tell you. So for a proposition like this, I may get a notion to demand quite a bit."

"Out with your bargain," encouraged Hall eagerly.

"Ah, well, I will not bankrupt you. I will want a stipend of three drinks of three star whisky, one of brandy, and one of port wine, per day, so long as I live. Besides I would like to expect credit of small amounts, when I am on the bum in gambling, and want to pick up again, or when I want to give a fellow a good beat, and expect a fine for an aftermath."

"As you say."

"As I say? No, it is for you to say whether I shall go ahead or not."

"Well, Buck Slimon, I am game."

Edwin Fox had waxed very impatient for his turn. "What can I expect," he asked greedily, as Hall aimed his dancing "eye-axle" at him.

"In what way do you especially wish to be favored as a compensation for co-working with Mr. Buck Slimon?" And Hall's words were as sweet as honey.

Readers must understand now, if they have not done so before, that Edwin Fox had officially got a "call" for the orthodox ministry. With voice thick with avarice, he said now to the wine merchant: "My good friend, Mr. Ladell. You know that I aspire for a well-paid position upon the completion of my theological studies. Your pastor is in broken health, and no matter whether you send him once or twice or

thrice to Florida, Switzerland or Italy, he will soon meet his Maker. I want you to do the utmost to establish me his successor."

"I promise that." And the "eye-axle" corroborated the candor and genuineness of Hall's pledge.

"How do you suggest that we work this thing through?" asked both murderers-to-be in almost one voice.

"I leave it to you," said both Hall and his "eye-axle" confidently, "and my darling Loopy will help you."

As fate would have it, Thorkell was caught by the death-net on the bank of the Red River. Secret surveillance over him brought about the opportunity. The means of conducting the murder had been well planned. First, the musician encountered Loopy, who could not even hold his frail body. From there he managed to pass Edward Fox, who tried to catch him with his trained fists. But, on account of Thorkell's ability to run fast for a short while, he eluded Fox only to run into Buck Slimon, who unceremoniously threw him in the depths of the river.

Thorkell could not swim, and sank immediately in the abyss.

The trio then hurried to police headquarters, announcing that Thorkell had accidentally drowned in the Red River, thereby shattering to the winds any possible clue of their act. (It needs hardly be stated that they committed the foul deed in the dark of the night, after having precluded any chance of a witness.)

The trio of criminals guided the constabulary in an effort to extricate Thorkell, alive or dead, from the clutches of the river. But, of course, they did not direct the police to the spot where Buck Slimon threw him in. Much rather the police, well-known for diligence of duty, conducted an extensive, but, of course, fruitless search, where Slimon, Fox and Loopy claimed to have made such heroic efforts to save Thorkell's life, but what was about half a mile from where Thorkell met his doom.

The papers were eloquent on the supposed accident. They repeated the story as told by Buck Slimon, Edwin Fox and Loopy Ladell. The descriptions of the impostors were vivid with valiance, especially that part of it pertaining to Loopy's aid in the splendid

effort to save a drowning man from death. And people admired prize-fighter Buck Slimon, theological student Edwin Fox, and capitalist Loopy Ladell!

And Thorkell! He was much better and more of a man now since he was dead than while he was among the living. Almost everybody had something good to say about him. Many, including the Ladells, mourned that a man of such splendid gifts should be lost to the world so early in life!

A few days later, Loopy Ladell went to see Alma. He noticed that she had been weeping. And he told her eagerly about the part he so heroically played in the effort to succor Mr. Nordland from drowning. But she had heard it all from the lips of his admirers. He also recited to her a speech as piled into him by his father, intimating a profound regard and respect for the pure and unselfish love that linked her and the eminently gifted musician together, and his most heartfelt condolence in her affliction. But all this did not seem to catch, it seemed to Loopy, and he grew impatient. In a spell of ecstasy in her presence, and also on account of his thoughts of her money, he, next to saying the most familiar words, proposed to her, and, of course, to the money she would inherit as well.

She did not answer a word, but fled away up to her room, as Loopy made an awkward attempt to embrace her.

So that was how matters trended. "Could it really be possible, that Thorkell had been persecuted and killed in vain?" thought Loopy dismally, on his return trip home.

And Alma was in the deep of disconsolation. Now, at last, she understood something about Thorkell. He was now the image of the purest, the noblest, the highest. All the bad stories about him were, in her opinion now, but misrepresentations, lies and calumnies. Why had she not known so before? Why did Thorkell have to die in order to enlighten her understanding, unfold her blindness? Why did she permit him to sink deeper and deeper in the slum of the saloon, and end his life in sluggish drowning? She could have helped him, saved him, had she only known that it was her holy duty to do so. But now it was too late—too late!

And oh, how she loved him, loved him, loved him!

Her sorrow and remorse became unendurable. After a week's torments, day and night, and without one moment's slackening, in her absolutely intolerable agony, she took poison late at night, and was discovered dead in her bed the following morning.

And then Hoggart realized the gravest mistake of his life. Fain would he have given away all his money, had he been able by so doing, to bring his only child back to life, and Thorkell too, whom he naturally thought was dead, and whom he saw in a different light from what was the case before. Now, the beautiful castle of his ambition crashed down in a moment. His only child was dead. There was nothing more to live for!

## CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHTH

## GERALDINE MAXWELL DIES

The heavy steel door was flung ajar and Sir Maxwell came running, panting and coughing, direct up to Magnus. Behind him and trying to keep pace with him, was a servant of trust—his private secretary.

"For the Lord's sake come instantly! My love is dying. Oh, oh! Heaven help me!" whispered the magnate, prostrated with grief and agony, big tears flooding his cheeks and glowing more brilliantly than his gold in the banks—they were the gold of love.

Magnus waited for no further explanations. His eyes filled with tears—tears of compassion, tears of raptures, that great reaches of imagination can scarcely fathom. Magnus beckoned the judge and hurried away in silence. The court was stunned and dumbfounded. The judge, who from boyhood had been an intimate chum of the financial monarch, was struck with ominous presentiment. He knew that a colossal calamity had befallen Sir Maxwell. Never had he seen his friend weep before, never in a state of over-excitement before. And in a mist of tears and puzzling broodings the judge prorogued the session, without going into elaborate elucidations for so doing. The three barristers of the plaintiff clamored for reasons for this extraordinary conduct of counsel and justice, to which his lordship briefly replied that, as Sir Maxwell required the counsel of the defence at the particular hour, he had to adjourn the proceedings. And as the whole court-assemblage was being thrown into confusion, the lawyers, so eager to fight the invincible Magnus, had to wait until the next sitting of the court.

Sir Maxwell's pompous automobile accelerated towards his residence. All speed regulations were broken. Pedestrians crossing the thoroughfare, and even those chafing the sidewalks, fled like flies in all directions.

Sir Maxwell took Magnus by the hand. The latter did notice that the former's steps were heavy up the

marble steps. The magnate led the way to Geraldine's bed-chamber.

Sir Maxwell looked at his love for the last time in this world and left the chamber in sublime tranquility. From that moment his and his wife's life was a solitude, a desert.

But Lady Geraldine Maxwell's eyes could not meet her father's last glance. They were already on the man who, by the decree of the cruel nature of its cause, was, against his inmost will, the cause of her early death. They effulged lustres, brighter and stronger than Magnus ever saw later in his life. Her cheeks, which a moment prior had the snowy pallor of death, shone with dazzling roses of her pure maiden blood. Her worn-out heart sent with its bursting beats the last message of love to her lips and cheeks—of love that, perhaps, never was as strong in any human.

"Magnus! Magnus! Magnus!" she ejaculated with a magnetic, soulful thrill. "Oh, how kind of you to come!"

Magnus gazed at her in a deadly silence. He felt suddenly unnerved. A weariness and even numbness seized him and diffused all his powerful frame. Through his mind, which in the presence of this queen of femininity became jumbled and confused, a stanza fluttered with the dolor and beamless gloom of a soul that has no glimpse of eternal hope:

"Grof thu' dapra fylgsni, svo dimt thraugt og kalt,  
Dauthans armar flytja til thin lifith alt,  
Thagnar, vonlaust djup fra ther kemur ei kvein,  
Kvol og harmar dvina er lifs huggun ein."

It was as if Geraldine Maxwell did read his dark, hopeless thoughts. "When I said that 'Nature is heartless,' I meant only existence, as we now know it, but I did not mean God and eternity."

Magnus could not reply. He had a temptation to utter a protest, to speak his conviction, but his tongue was fettered. But he did not know why.

In another part of Crescentwood there was something that credulous people would have claimed to be a ghost

of the late Thorkell Nordland. But, as a matter of fact, he was alive in the flesh as well as in the spirit.

A canoe passing, when Thorkell was flung into the Red River, cheated it out of its promised prey. With the party that saved his life, Thorkell went to a small Minnesota town where he recuperated a little. But there was a local prohibition in the town, so he eventually returned to the darkest grave of his life—Winnipeg.

And now he had completely lost his way. He was mysteriously confused. He did not know which way to go, nor where he was.

And in Lady Maxwell's bed-chamber she and Magnus confronted each other and confronted death. She bade him sit down on her bed. He did so mechanically. "Let me fondle the hands that I love so, so much. I have a right to say that I love them." And she pressed them as infinitely softly and warmly as if they were the holy hands of love itself.

The door opened softly, as if by a fairy, and in stepped Thorkell Nordland. His every nerve trembled. His eyes spouted beautiful, brilliant lustres through his thick glasses. His rose-dotted, lean cheeks were ablaze.

"Pa—pardon," he stammered. And for some seconds Magnus feared that the immensity of the artist's emotion would culminate in complete prostration.

"Pardon for my intrusion," he began again in a tender, ringing voice. "I was on my way from Mr. Whitney. I namely teach his boy on the violin. I lost the street car I was to take, and resolved to walk for my health instead. And then I got lost here in Wellington Crescent, where I knew every street as well as my alphabet. I strayed for a time and then decided to inquire about my whereabouts. I rapped on the door of the house here. Nobody answered. And some irresistible, mystic power entranced me up here. And here I am. But I do not know why."

"Are you a ghost or a man?" asked Lady Maxwell, evidently astounded. And Magnus seemed hardly to believe his own eyes.

Thorkell then related his story from the time he was thrown into the river until he had returned to Winnipeg, but two days ago. "But I am afraid I do very much disturb you," he appended.

"You do no disturbance," answered Lady Maxwell.



"I am glad you came. You are a wonderful genius. You will win celebrity. My death is no secret for an artist. And perhaps you know all. You and Magnus are genuine friends. Maybe he has——"

"~~Had~~ what? I do not grasp this at all," he interposed zealously and with impatience. "It is all a puzzle to me and——" He faltered by subtlety and force of his responsive feelings. Oh, such virgin charm! Oh, such angel-beauty! Her ever-lustrous eyes and rosy cheeks effulged more glorious and enchanting brilliance than he had cherished at any other occasion in her presence.

"No, he has never told me anything about, about——" He did not finish his recapitulation. His soul was tossed in the sea of his emotion, like a little canoe in the embrace of the ocean.

"Nobody told you. You do not know anything. But perhaps now——" She stopped. Her raven-black hair and blazing eyes drew all his life towards her.

"I certainly know nothing," he said, as if in a dream. "I really do not even know myself at all."

Her eyes strolled from the artist and caressed him that she loved unto death. Then she looked upwards, as if through the ceiling into infinity. And they prayed—her eyes prayed, prayed.

Then she turned her gaze to the musician. "Play, play, Thorkell Nordland," she entreated. And her voice quivered with soulful emotions. "Play, oh, play! Do play something about—yes, about my love!"

Like a flash, the bow of his violin struck the first chords of his latest composition, entitled "Wings of the Soul." And while the pathetic, love-devoted, hope-inspiring tones filled the hearts of Magnus and Lady Geraldine with wondrous raptures, the genius himself was wondering why he was playing it in this particular room, for the first time for other people, and why there seemed to be in it sounds of even mysterious meaning, lilts of something he even did not know. He had written it for showing the material, the earthly, the dominant, irresistible power of love; the soaring flights of the imagination; the glorious eminence of pure, noble thoughts; the sweet pathos of hopeful yearnings; the fervency of adolescence; the beauty and charm of budding manhood or womanhood; the flames of passions;

the woe and darkness of unloved hearts; the solitude of an unappreciated, misunderstood or ununderstood soul; the nonchalance or acrimony, as compared with compassion and generosity and the greatness of human goodness, together with unnumbered other elements of life, as interpreted by the world's greatest gift. But somehow there was something, even apart from all this, that expressed itself in his music-lay. But he did not know what it might be.

Lady Maxwell heard the positive hope of God and eternity that echoed deep in her soul from almost every note of Thorkell's serenade. A very vague idea of something mysterious in Thorkell's playing crept into Magnus' materialistic mind. But it took more than a piece of celestial music to move him to a belief in unscientific, incomprehensible and well-established-unknowable theories. But yet, he almost discerned sounds, vibrating glory of an everlasting life. But why? How could that be? Thorkell, the infidel, like himself. Why? Why?

Thorkell was somewhat out of his usual tune and in a new world of tunes this particular evening. The world had been strange since he left Mr. Whitney's residence. But it did not enter his mind that he might be subject to influences from a quite unknown-to-him-before existence.

"Let me press three kisses on your lips. I love them so, so much. I surely have a right to say that I love them," said Lady Maxwell to Magnus.

And even without knowing, except in a kind of dream, he felt her kisses on his lips, as tender and soft as he imagined an angel kiss, in conformity with what his mother had told him of love in Heaven.

Meanwhile Thorkell started to play "Death of Asa." Needless to say, his rendition of this master-work was an embodiment, an incarnation of a maiden's death.

"Grieg is excellent," commented Lady Geraldine in trills of rapture. "But it is all sorrow, irredeemable grief. But your melody 'Wings of the Soul' inspires hope, and still more hope. It has true wings of hope for the soul."

"What!" shouted the musician.

"It intones the soul with a hope that will be fulfilled, the hope of the best and the loftiest. It crowns the hope

of hopes in a spring-verdure that never fades. You do not know this now. But one day you will know."

Thorkell was bewildered. This was all Hebrew to him.

There was a brief spell of silence. And while Thorkell caught no glimpse of her beautiful eulogy of the offspring of his soul, Magnus did not get much nearer its vital sparks of illuminative might—the might that conquers death.

"You will play the best still while I am dying," said Lady Geraldine, looking into Thorkell's intelligent face.

"Dying!" He felt the chill of his pain, like teeth of ice, gnawing the strings of his heart "Dying! You dying! You leaving this sombre world, that needs so much the kindness of your heart and the splendor of your soul. Dying! No, that is impossible. You won't die right here, now. You won't!" And Thorkell's excitement was terrific.

"But I will. And that is why your friend Magnus is here. And perhaps——"

"Perhaps ~~is~~" cried Thorkell in anguish, without knowing what he was saying.

"You will do what I ask you, won't you?" And the sweet imploration touched Thorkell's heart like when a dying sunbeam says farewell to a soft flower.

"Yes, Lady Maxwell. I surely will. I will play Massenet's 'Melodie d'Elegie.' It is the greatest song of mourning and sorrow I ever knew."

"Yes, it is. I have seen Jules Massenet. It seemed to me that his elegy permeated my heart that very moment. But it lasted for only a little while. He is, at least in the respect we both know best, one of the ablest of modern European composers."

"But will this country or old Europe claim Thorkell Nordland?" asked Magnus, whose pride for his friend flamed up strongly.

"North America," answered Lady Geraldine. "North America!" She viewed the musician with evident and hopeful admiration. "North America shall and will claim Thorkell Nordland. This land has, despite its wild adventures, corruption, tyranny of wealth, heartlessness, cruelty and crimes, been a school to him as others that live and work here. This land of my birth has also much charm and beauty which can help to

develop a genius. Thorkell Nordland is a man of this hemisphere, although he will conquer the world."

Lady Maxwell put her arms around Magnus' neck. "Let me die with your heart. That is my last wish before I enter eternity." And in her words was her universe of love in both worlds.

Magnus pressed her to his heart.

"Oh, Magnus! Dear, dear Magnus! Our relations have been pure. I loved you. But you did not love me. It was wise of you to resist my love, as you could not give me love back. Had you accepted my love and pretended that you loved me, we would have married, had a home, and I could have cherished the pathos of motherhood. But sooner or later I would have found out the truth and died from pain and grief."

"Lady Maxwell," answered Magnus in strong ecstasy, "my conscience is my judge. I tried to reason this out. But it was impossible. I always came to the conclusion that I did not love you."

"Reason out, reason out love! Truly there reason is worth nothing. I reasoned too. But I always came to the result that I did love you!"

"Reason worth nothing," he echoed with a sigh—a sigh of smothering perplexity.

"Magnus! oh, dear, dear Magnus! You are a hero! I know the temptation was so great that many could not have withstood it. Perhaps I am not saying too much."

"You surely are not. There is hardly a man that has seen you but to fall in love with you. Even my friend here (he now whispered) is in love with you."

"With me," she smiled sweetly. "He will one day

"She stopped.

"There is the mayor's son, the son of our Member of Parliament, the Lieutenant-Governor's son, and the son of——"

"Do not waste time by counting all these fellows. But I am glad that death comes now, else I might have taken this to hasten its advent." She pointed to a small bottle labelled poison.

"You did not intend to——?" He hesitated.

"Well, it is this way. I bought this poison here the very same morn that we parted after the memorable Coliseum ball. I kind of hoped that death would come

soon to release my soul. I have waited and waited until now. And I did wait long enough. Perhaps it seems as though the collision and the thunderbolt combined with my agony to work the might of the poison. The physicians who examined me both after the train accident and after the lightning struck me, could not place any injury. But I felt it. And thanks for it. There is mercy in life after all."

All of a sudden, Magnus felt her heart stop beating, like a clock whose winding has run out. With a tremendous effort she rose and pressed closer to his breast. And he found her heart start to pulsate again very, very slowly, irregularly and indistinctly, like when a clock that has run out is shaken. It will tick for a few seconds. Her cheeks rapidly paling in death rested with his. The ever-brilliant flames of her black eyes flared up with magnificent, goddess-like charm—the one of an eternal moment. She looked on Magnus for the last time in her bodily existence, and said, with a cadence that always reminded both young men of the sweetness of the voice of a dying swan: "You will see me after I am deceased. I will be with you, warm your home and fill it with charm and bliss. I will sanctify it and make it a Heaven for him I love through all eternity."

Then she turned her dying eyes on the artist. "I have seen a vision. Oh, how kind fate is to you, Thorkell Nordland! How happy you will be!"

Then Thorkell started to play the "Elegie," and something wonderful struck him, which he understood but many years afterwards. Never before, nor after, did he play Massenet's Elegy nor any other song in the same wise. It was as if all the angels of love with all their harps in consonance played in the magic strain.

Oh, such peace! Oh, such tranquility! Oh, such wonder-stillness! Both young men were in a state above human comprehension and human realization. The chamber was a world of trance. And Lady Geraldine Maxwell's pure, generous and noble soul was emancipated from disappointments, inconsistency and awe of this world. Invisible, but felt—felt as no language can describe—she lingered by Magnus, and with mighty, soft, holy arms embraced every sensation, every impulse, every yearning, every ambition and every thought—flash of his soul, and with her mouth touched

every vibration of his lips, and with her ears listened to every pulse of his strong heart—the heart she loved.

Magnus had weighed everything often, often. He had nothing to repent, but much to mourn. He was not to blame, but, but—fate!

The funeral characterized a large number of wealthy people, life-long friends of the Maxwell family, who now wanted to pay their respect and condolence in the best way they could, and also by a still larger number of poor folks, who had been rendered a generous aid by the financial monarch and his wife, who actually loved their contemporaneous travellers of the journey of life, and in their heart of hearts were truly kind. There was no pomp. Not even flowers were received, except one—the only one acceptable according to her last wish—a flower of dazzling color—the serene emblem of hope.

A week later Sir Maxwell instructed Magnus to draft his will. It provided for a wise distribution of his entire fortune, after his day, to charitable institutions.

v

## CHAPTER TWENTY-NINTH

## THORKELL'S SUCCOR

Thorkell's sinking went on mechanically. And, as has been stated, he became completely destitute. And for a time he reached the unhappy distinction of being classified as a professor in hoboism. To be sure, he differed from all other hobos or tramps, as he differed from men of other classes of society. He rendered beginners tuition for violin playing on a small scale. Such chances became, however, fewer in number and their proceeds went short of his requirements. Engagements for playing solos at public concerts became rare. And even the so-called charitable and Christian societies found it below their dignity and repute to ask him to donate services to them. He was obliged to beg directly or indirectly most of his whisky and food. Hoboism, which distorts manliness, strangles ambition, challenges virtue, militates against self-reliance and tends to kill hope itself, could not crush his innate gentility, fine amiableness, and the broad and high vision of his ideals. Even in the most pathetic or distressful state of his penury, or when he was strongly charged with inebriating fluids, some of his greatest masterpieces were written. When he heard of Alma's suicide it may be granted that the next few days to follow were in all probability the most miserable ones he lived. And it was then he wrote "The Prayer of Mourning," which the leading artists of the world have classed as one of the greatest meditative mediums ever known.

Men of fortune and success have hosts of friends and admirers everywhere. The orthodox ministers are at their service, to shower absolution over them and so overhaul them that they appear wonderfully nice and smart in the eyes of the world. But men of misfortune and failures have no such means at their disposal. Men of accomplishments are highly respected and helped in countless ways, assistance either volunteered by foolish, ignorant masses, or command of power makes it so. But down-and-out tramps are up against the opposition

and enmity of the social forces combined. A man of financial actions, be he a crook, a swindler, a felon, has a remarkably facilitating advantage on society's machinery; at least, as long as he is not tangled into the technical nets of the law, which happens rather seldom; while an idler or a hobo, who is quite a perilous enemy against himself and whose penalty—for life either penalizes or rewards—falls upon himself, without much harm to other people, is downed and despised. Society could be in a good fix for all that tramps and hobos hurt it. But some of its great members are a million times more burdening to it, degrading and ruining it, than loungers, tramps and hobos.

The size of this novel does not make it possible to describe at length Thorkell Nordland's hoboism, although same would be interesting and might be of great value, as it could help to compel society to look better after its best men. Society cannot afford to treat men of genius as outcasts. It is an unpardonable waste! When he was deepest downtrodden by himself and other men in combination, he turned to his violin for salvation. That was the only sensible course to take. And he took it. And his "Ode to His Violin" tells the story:

My soul is baptized in thy sweet, trembling trills,  
In thy cries of my yearning, in thy sighs of my pain,  
In thy lofty, divine and all-holy thrills,  
That bespeak all by seeking, whether true or in vain.

My heart is entwined and my feelings are dewed  
In thy efflux of harmonies, deep from my soul,  
Whether tried in the suffering world or denude,  
Of life's positive climax, they're love's only goal.

Celestial fountain! I drink, drink from thee  
Strong nectars that cause all my soul to respond.  
To throb, surge and flame in a world within me  
In mighty emotions, both godly and fond.

O source of compassion! Thy bright, living streams  
Shed forth in thy fires lily-touches and balm;  
The tear-odored dew of entombed blossom-dreams  
May meet some stray lives and their grief put to calm.

Inspirer of hope! Yearning's sweet sister dear,  
Calling forth every vibrance that thought wakes in me;  
When desperate witches of darkness appear  
And point but to death—to thy embrace I flee.



My youth, which was only a morn, shorn of day,  
 A half-withered wreath on a small, distant tomb,  
 Pitches high in thy strains melodies of my May—  
 Which no June did follow—'twas deprived of its bloom.

"Where Sorrow prevails there is sure holy ground,"  
 My mem'ries are hallowed to my youth's slabless mound;  
 Thy notes to my sanctuary's silence recall—  
 "And its tunes, though unheard, are the sweetest of all."

Thou great spur of raptures to pray and to bless!  
 The wounds of my life in thy subtle caress,  
 Are healed at the moments I bleed on thy strings  
 In grief's ecstasy, through the tears on my wings.

Echo sweet tunes of mourning and respond tenderly  
 Every rapture that moved in youth's bliss within me;  
 Sound the throbs of pure longing in love's fountain purged,  
 And the holy emotions of hearts then converged.

Spark on, yes, thrill on with thy hot, flashing beats,  
 Which pulse of All-Mother, my nature repeats,  
 From daybreak to eve still thy life-and-death's lay,  
 And Sorrow herself doth the subvoices play.

Play on, on my soul, sink deep, deep in my grief,  
 And my violin dear thou shalt bring me relief,  
 For thou art I myself, love reflexed on my soul,  
 I Sorrow's sweet darling, she and thou are my goal.

Angel-herald of wonders, magic, great and sublime,  
 Passing measure and distance, space and infinite time,  
 This ballad I inscribe, my dear violin, to thee,  
 My music is a homage to thy majesty.

And when he, on account of the redeeming power of his violin, had decided to start again in life and fight that struggle to victory, he turned to Magnus for financial aid. And on his way to the lawyer's office he chanced upon Sam Benson. Thorkell told him in a few words of his plight and his plan to leave for somewhere else. Sam did not reply. He scribbled out a cheque from a tiny banknote-book and handed it to Thorkell.

"Thousand dollars!" exclaimed Nordland, gasping.

"I told you that I would like to remember your service in Ninette," sighed Benson, and big tears fell from his tear-worn eyes on the cold, frozen sidewalk.

Thorkell was about to start a big effusion of laudation, when his benefactor speeded away, after a warm handshake.

Magnus welcomed him in a simple but sincere man-

ner. He was heartily in accord with Thorkell's prearrangement.

"I have waited for this hour," said Magnus, raptured. "I could have prevented most of the lot of your suffering. I could have, by this time, brought your persecutors to justice. But they wait their turn, which now is not far off."

Magnus then told him all about why so many slanderous falsehoods had been propagated about him; why the attempts to kill him had been repeatedly made; why he had become so unexpectedly sick in Hall Ladell's saloon, and why he himself had seemingly deserted him in his awful plight.

"But my course has been in conformity with the best of my understanding," he perorated. "You had to suffer all this in order to find the best in yourself. I am, of course, sad for Alma's early death. But I am glad that you lost her, for she was worthless. Poor thing, dead as she is, she was worthless, worthless."

Thorkell acknowledged that all that his friend said was true.

Magnus advised him to go to New York, start study there with the best of tutors, and make good.

Thorkell then informed him of what Sam Benson had done for him.

"Good! Splendid!" exclaimed Magnus very gladly. "I am only too glad to add ten thousand to it." And he handed Thorkell a cheque for ten thousand dollars.

Thorkell's sensation was, to say the least of it, terrific. He embraced Magnus so wildly that the lawyer had to do his best to avoid being suffocated from Thorkell's hot caress and his own laughing, for he was no less happy than Thorkell. But when Thorkell's emotion reached its height he wept from gratitude and joy, and rested on Magnus' bosom like an orphan child to a trusting foster-father.

"You never need to be out of funds. Be careful and work hard. And may luck be with you," said the busy lawyer as they parted. And then he added with a broad smile: "'Life is short but art is long.' I know that you are a real artist. And I consider you a very good investment."

## CHAPTER THIRTIETH

## QUICK WINDING-UP OF THE CLIMAX

Magnus was on a vacation trip in the Rocky Mountains. Before he left his busy desk for his brief holidays he had divined that some conspiracy was brewing against himself. He inferred that probably Raben Goldstone would consider it expedient to get rid of any possible rival, be he old, it did not matter, so long as there be one. And cruelty and crime was something abundant in Goldstone's nature. And, as a matter of fact, Magnus was on the lookout, ready to defend his life, if attacked.

And, as could be expected, the attempt of his assassination rang with a revolver shot. It was a dark, moonless night. The bullet missed its aim. - And Magnus was, despite the gloom, upon his assailant before more shots could be fired. With a terrific stroke by Magnus' right hand, the revolver was hurled out of the assassin's savage fist. And then a wrestle ensued of life and death. Magnus was surprised at the gigantic strength of his adversary. And for a time it seemed to be a matter of endurance which of them would win out. But then, so as to make things move lively, Magnus thought he should try the Icelandic glima. And with the first swift blow on his left calf by Magnus' right foot he reeled, while the second blow, landing on the inside of his right thigh, sent his bulky, massive body down with a crash, Magnus falling upon his adversary's belly.

Magnus extricated himself from the terrible grip of the fallen Goliath and tied his hands and feet. He then went to search for the revolver, and thanks to his keen vision he located it fifty feet away. Magnus put it in his pocket and began to examine the would-be murderer.

"What motive brought you here?"

"Me want money, me work for money," drawled the sniper.

"Who bribed you for this odious deed?"

"Misther Gooldstone and Misther Thrapson."

"Did they all pay you money?"

"Dey all gib money."

"How much money did the agreement call for?"

"Me get ticket and many money if me kill, very many money."

"Oh, you miserable beast!" said Magnus with utter disgust.

"Me fool," corroborated the poor wretch.

"Are you Galician?"

"Me, yes, Galician; me Galician; me fool."

"Don't you feel ashamed of yourself?"

"Me guess me shame," echoed the bully.

"You are a felon. You know what awaits you?"

"Me non ferstay, me non understay good right."

What was this? Magnus heard a cadence which he knew he had heard before. He carried a small flashlight on his person. He held it close to his adversary's face, which was as black as tar.

"Well, I'll be damned if this is not prize-fighter Buck Slimon!"

"Me no Buck Slimon. Me no prize-fighter. To hell mit prize-fighting," grunted the fettered giant.

"See here, Mr. Buck Slimon, let us talk business, not nonsense. If you don't tell me all about this conspiracy I will send a bullet of your revolver through your heart."

"Do you, do you really mean it?"

"Oh, yes, Signor Buck Slimon, I mean it. Or why not? You came here on this spot with the intent to assassinate me. And the world would be better off by your leaving it quick!" And he took the revolver out of his pocket and aimed it at Buck Slimon's breast.

"Oh, this is not necessary. I'll tell you everything, everything." And Buck Slimon's voice was perfectly calm.

It was a long story, and it must be put up here in a condensed form. It began by Violet's return from Ninette. Raben Goldstone insisted on enforcing his claim, according to contract, for her hand. He had been affected by the decline of the exchange, which evidently was rapidly becoming a general financial collapse, a panic. Likewise Trapson was close to a verge of insolvency. And thus both gentlemen, being ignorant of each other's condition and hence believing each other

to be of a good financial backing, purported to tide them over on intermarriage.

Sir Horace Richmouth came then also into the field to sue for Violet's hand. Trapson, who was still more anxious about that match, because Sir Richmouth was richer than Goldstone, promised Sir Horace his daughter, intending then, of course to break off business with Raben. But Sir Richmouth took to bed, his illness aggravated and his end was expected hourly. Trapson resumed his devotion to Goldstone with renewed enthusiasm. He pressed the matter with Violet all he dared. But his wife hesitated to follow suit as of old. Her reluctance was because she feared that Violet might break down and that tuberculosis might prey upon her again. Violet evidently loved Magnus still. And Trapson and Goldstone agreed to have Magnus killed, in the hope that his death would divert her thoughts about him and her love for him. Numerous spies were hired to detect his movements, and Buck Slimon was bribed to kill him.

"You are my prisoner," said Magnus, as Buck Slimon was through with the story.

"I submit," answered Buck Slimon with perfect composure.

They hurried to the next station and took the first train to Winnipeg. Magnus handed Buck Slimon over to the police on three charges of attempted murder; two of them pertaining to Thorkell Nordland and one to himself.

And events moved swiftly these days. No sooner was Magnus at home than he learned that Trapson had overridden his wife's will as well as Violet's say in her own destiny. It would take a long time to describe, at length, Violet's suffering. Suffice it to say that she was dragged to the altar nearer death than life. The well-paid clergyman had repeated thrice the first question of the rite pledging her life to Goldstone. And her bridesmaid was about to answer instead of her when the police entered, promptly arresting Raben Goldstone on a charge of complicity in an attempted murder. Magnus had withheld any charge against Trapson. And because he loved Violet, the haughty tyrant was spared the humiliation of the penitentiary. Edwin Fox

was picked up by the police before he could succeed Hall Ladell's beloved pastor. Likewise Foly Hlunius, Egleso, Gillies Thurton and Hredskinn Mairntain Hrof, were made to answer for their doings. Buck Slimon and Edwin Fox got long penitentiary terms, and the remainder journeyed to the provincial jail. Magnus conducted the prosecution.

And the impending financial crash came. It was a gigantic collapse, a real panic. Real estate, stocks and bonds fell greatly in value, and in some instances became worthless. All the capitalists dealt with in this story were, in this financial blizzard, completely snowed under. Hall Ladell and his dear son Loopy were housed in the penitentiary for several years for their criminal persecutions of Thorkell Nordland. Magnus prosecuted at their trial. And when they came out again they established a soda fountain. When the seizure of Hall Ladell's wine-parlors was made, he got away with a big case of whiskey. Mrs. Black, his sister, kept it for him while he served his sentence in the penitentiary. His lemonade is said to have an agreeable flavor for he admixes it with a wee bit of whiskey from the case he cheated his creditors of.

Eagle Ladell exploded his factory rather than let his creditors get hold of it. He then escaped mysteriously to Europe. And the last that was heard of him was that he attended a temperance conference in Switzerland.

And as we leave John Spears, he is, in the surly blast of January, using up for his little shack the famous roll of tarpaper he used during his long career as a builder of dwellings in the city.

Pilatus Ladell took up truck-driving.

Toryman Nassy got a job as a caretaker of one of the apartments he himself built.

Aaron Hoggart bought John Spears' celebrated bicycle and began to sell annuities to illiterate foreigners in the rural districts. He is prostrate with grief and does not do much business.

Allan Albrecht got a job, as luck would have it, in a kindergarten, where his business is to look after orphan children.

Jim Goldstone was about to prospect on a new mine, when by some accident he fell head-on down into the deep pit and was no more.

When Raben, his son, came out of the penitentiary, he fell in love with a very old, wealthy widow and, of course, married her.

And here we have the synopsis of the finish of the tyrants of our story, who all had been wealthy and who all got bankrupt.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIRST  
VICTOR AND VANQUISHED

Circumstance is either the most servile slave or the most oppressive tyrant imaginable. Circumstance tyrannized Trapson's life for half of its span, then turned and became his most obedient and humble serf for the other half. And then showed the gormand its cruel teeth again, for he, like so many others, became insolvent in the general financial crash. Those of his old friends (for private benefit) who did not go down in the unbefore-experienced monetary collapse, turned their backs upon him. Warrant for the seizure of his own residence had been served upon three days of grace. And without relief, or hope of succor, the last hours of leniency were leaping away.

What could he do? If everything would be taken from him he would become subject to charity. He could not work with his hands. And bankrupt, laden with heavy judgments and with all credit and prestige lost, he was worse than dead. And then there were his wife and daughter. Of course it did not matter so much about them. He could, of course, leave them to their fate to get along as best they could. Now, he considered his wife as having been but a source of annoyance to him. And he realized, at last, that he had not obtained more happiness out of their union than had he been married to an owl. And his daughter had been to him an expense and disappointment, instead of being an up-to-date commodity on the marriage market. She had resisted all his ways and means of getting any recompense for having brought her up in indulgence and exuberance. What good was it to have a daughter that desired one special fellow, and especially at the time when he was a poor, all-forsaken immigrant? Only if she had been like himself, all would have ended well!

Could he not kill himself? Was there any hell to fear? Was not all the talk of the clergy an inspired



graft? What about the many ten dollar bills he had placed on the plate in his pastor's gaudy church! They would not come back! They were now firmly deposited in his minister's divine corpulence.

Suicide was out of the question. He must live longer. Whiskey and cigars still tasted good. And then were automobile races and revelry in his clubs something mighty lovely to live for. Of course, during the past few days since his bankruptcy had transpired, his appearance at meetings of his clubs had been seemingly unwelcome. By cavilling words, captious looks and unpleasant gestures the members of his clubs, that is to say, those of safe financial standing, made him feel unhappy and disconcerted in their presence, an unmistakable signal to him that they considered they could get along all right enough without his patronage.

At a point of compulsory necessity, he reckoned that he could manage to live apart from every club or clique. But how could he cut off his supply of wine, which was as important to his body as meat or milk?

Magnus! Yes, Magnus, to be sure! At last he came as a star in the darkness, as a hope in the wilderness. It was a gift of destiny that he loved his daughter. Now he could have her if he wanted! Sweet heavens! Yes, it should be hoped that he would marry her still, that he would receive her with open arms!

And Trapson went direct to Magnus' office.

Magnus was busy as usual. And Trapson was obliged to wait two hours before his turn came.

Trapson greeted Magnus with the most flattering utterances of his limited lexicon. Magnus' words were as cold and indifferent as was his manner.

"You can have my daughter. You are welcome to her. It would be a very great pleasure for me to have you for a son-in-law and——"

"If this is all the substance of your errand our interview is over," interrupted Magnus harshly.

"I thought some compromise might be reached, some agreement effected and——"

"Stop! There is the door!" Magnus interrupted again, pointing downward.

"Pa—pa—pardon me," stammered Trapson, trying to muster all his courage, "I—I—I am bankrupt."

"Did you come to tell me that?" Magnus' face darkened.

Trapson raised his sullen, liquor-tainted eyes and stared at Magnus like a lost seafarer at a distant cape. Magnus' eyes dropped. His cheeks were flaming red, evincing incitement and wrath struggling for mastery over him.

"I am ruined!" groaned Trapson in abject abandonment.

This remark appeared to miss Magnus' attention altogether.

"All means of assistance are denied me," wailed Trapson. "The banks have closed on me. I am deserted save by my old woman and——" Here he faltered, lest the mention of his daughter might enrage Magnus.

"You deserve it," snapped Magnus. His voice was husky, which was unusually the case.

"That may be," echoed Trapson in a quaking, broken voice. He was prepared to allow himself to be humiliated to the lowest degree possible, as a last straw of hope. He vaguely understood that Magnus aimed to punish him and revenge for old grievances. Of course the real preponderance of the events of Trapson's life had always passed his comprehension. For what he termed in his mind as grievances were crimes.

Magnus looked at Trapson. Pity and contempt mingled in the fire and force of his eyes. The old gormand shrank and huddled, like a heap of flesh under pressure, into the chair on which he was reclining, as if that piece of furniture was going to eat him up. Magnus' steady and strong attitude had always awed Trapson. And as the lawyer's commanding interrogations came hurrying into the dethroned money-tyrant's ears, they sounded like terrific thunders. Indeed, it was his judgment day!

"Do you acknowledge that you are and always have been a coward, useless for the community, nay, more, a burden for this city, a big poisonous wound on the national body?"

"Yes—ye—yes, I—I do."

"Do you acknowledge that you are a thief; that you have, namely, stolen all you have ever controlled, and that you have squandered big, big sums of money grabbed from poor, struggling families; that you have lured unsuspecting, honest people to invest their savings in

worthless bonds, watered stock and real property that never existed?"

"Ye—yes, I s'pose. Ye—yes, I do."

"Do you acknowledge that you have spread corruption everywhere on your path; that you have sustained and patronized brothels, saloons and all-night clubs, lotteries and gambling resorts and other criminal institutions within your reach?"

"I can't very well gainsay this."

"Do you further acknowledge that, as you have been a constant visitor of the bawdy places, you have most maltreated and abused your wife?"

"I presume this is correct. I own that it is just as you say."

"Do you acknowledge that you have worse than murdered your only child by separating her from the man she probably loved, and thereupon tried to compel her to marry swindlers and crooks to satisfy your insane greed? You actually sold her twice, didn't you?"

"Unfortunately, this is true."

"Do you acknowledge that you were an accomplice in an attempt upon my life?"

"Oh, this is horrible!" whined Trapson. And all his bulky body shuddered.

"But it is true?"

"Ye—ye—yes, yes, ye—es—es."

"I infer, then, that you acknowledge that you should serve a sentence in the penitentiary to the end of your dirty days. It is too bad that none of your many crimes reaches the legal authority of the very maximum of the criminal code, namely, capital punishment, for it would, I believe, be in the interest of humanity to have you beheaded or hanged, as the forescribed penalization is for the biggest offences against society in this country."

Trapson shook like a leaf, not from penitence but from fear, that Magnus be about to tangle him in the net of the law. Perhaps he had a witness hidden somewhere in his office. And although no watching eye nor hearkening ear was in sight, he regretted that he had humiliated himself so miserably in the wild hope of turning Magnus to his aid, and for having confessed so much with the same purpose in view, because he realized that it would be an easy matter for the clever lawyer to have a cruel sentence imposed upon him, no

matter whether there be a witness or not. And he actually saw the steel door close behind him and the barred cell-door open in the living tomb—the penitentiary—when a tall girl-stenographer entered by a side door and declared that a certain document was ready for Magnus' seal and signature. Trapson imagined it to be a warrant for his arrest.

Magnus signed and sealed the document and then stored it in his pocket. Trapson stared at him so fixedly and with such a tension as if his eyes were going to leap forth from his head and swallow Magnus. His dread and despair was in itself a penalty.

"Your cowardly confession, so forced at the point of fear and want and need, will most certainly not induce me to come to your aid. On the other hand, I am quite willing to hand you over to the criminal court to dispose of the remainder of your worthless life."

Trapson was now left without a doubt as to what was coming. Why was he such a fool to expect a succor from a man that he had so grossly wronged? Yet he was not in a penitent mood. Far from it! He was merely so paralysed from terror that he found it impossible for himself to rise and flee from the office before a constable would enter and arrest him. With a fraction of a reflection, however, he became convinced that the warrant must be still in Magnus' pocket and that his apprehension would not take place there.

Silence followed. Magnus pondered for the last time on the situation. He had already thought it out. The decision was made and all transfers sealed. He had followed Trapson's business ever since they parted. He had seen the impending bankruptcy long before Trapson himself saw it. He knew exactly the value of Trapson's holdings and the condition in which they were, such as amount of mortgages on his properties, arrears of payments, etc. He knew by his foreseeing instinct that Trapson would seek his aid. And then what? Ah! he surely had—had to—yes, he had to on account of her! And why? She was nothing to him. He was never going to marry her. Never! It was below his pride to permit himself, at any time, to be reconciled with her, because she failed to "follow him out into the cold, the dark and the uncertain." But he loved her, didn't he? Therefore she must not suffer destitution!

"Kneel down at my feet, you felon, quick! demanded Magnus.

Trapson did as he was ordered.

"Kiss the soles of my shoes three times!" continued Magnus, and the disgust echoed in every utterance.

The dethroned money-monarch executed promptly what he was bid.

"Hold your arms up and swear solemnly to ask your daughter to forgive you!"

Trapson took the oath. "Ha—have I not to ask forgiveness of yourself?" added Trapson, stutteringly.

"No!" A great emphasis was placed on this monosyllable.

After a brief silence Magnus addressed his vanquished foe, and, like a true victor, his look softened and his voice was mild and a slight quiver evinced the tender emotion that was allied with the generosity that he was about to divulge.

"Now, let me see," said Magnus, as if to himself, although looking at Trapson. "How much is needed in order to satisfy your creditors? Yes, to be sure, five hundred and twenty-three thousand nine hundred and sixty-eight dollars and forty-one cents."

Trapson was amazed. How could Magnus know it so exactly?

Thereupon the attorney commanded Trapson to assign to himself all his real estate as a security for first mortgage.

Trapson did as he was ordered, as if in a dream. And a happy dream it was. Now he was saved.

Magnus mailed a pile of cheques. And when Trapson left he was a secure owner of all his holdings with Magnus as mortgagee.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-SECOND

## LOVE CONQUERS PRIDE

Magnus was lonesome; he repugned the pressure that the veracity of Lady Maxwell's ever-present axioms brought to bear upon his private life. His energy and endurance were marvellous. His practice grew in magnitude until it had outgrown in volume and revenue any other competitive firm in the country. He could, therefore, with respect to economical necessity, look for an early retirement from the strenuous profession.

He resisted and kept in check the queen of passions—the conjugal love. But its inradication was too strong to be ignored.

The time for regalements and rest was Sundays and holidays. His professional labors occupied some sixteen hours per week-day, and more wearing and exhausting than those was the unsatiated hunger of his heart. He loved, his was love, although he refused to concede to its requisition.

Then it came to pass that the essence of his intuitive affection—the femininity in him—went through red fires of a real test.

At the cosy, comfortable hearth, and in the circle of his devoted sister and fidel colleague and partner, he was painfully aware of what he wanted. And surrounded by amassed possibilities to indulge in and enjoy, he found himself desolate and deserted. And so, after his daily herculean achievements he ate a hasty repast and then drew alone in his magnificent Cole automobile along the prairie highways. Now and then the irresistible haunting of the foe of his equanimity—his heart—caused him to be too heavy on the throttle, and he frequently motored at a precarious speed. Often when he went on his lonely drives he stopped for a few moments on the veranda, gazing in quaint wonder and solemnity at his sister and Goodwyn, who confabulated admirably, companioniously. He watched with queer sensations and throbbing emotions of pleasure the looks, the glances, the half-unfolded signification that nestled

and snug in the warm cadence of their every-day-topical colloquy.

And how lonely he was then.

But let us turn to the real test we are arriving at. Magnus was just back from an extensive drive. It seemed as if that man could never become fatigued. He perused a current novel, and subsequently absorbed his attention in a lengthy contribution to a widely circulated New York magazine, by an eminent critic on etude. The article outlined the actuality of a rising star. Thorkell Nordland was already a sensation in musical circles. His appearance on the stage and in concerts did not as much stir audiences as become a welcome discovery to refined and original artists of the highest order. His compositions were being placed on the ineffaceable records of the gramophones by several pre-eminent vocalists and instrumentalists, and he himself, the contribution read, had been invited to play in a talking machine record his ingenious "Life of Hope." Magnus was approaching the end of the article amidst pleasant thrills and raptures when he was disturbed by a caller. "A young lady desires an interview with you," his sister announced.

"Usher her in here," he answered simply.

His sweetheart was before him. "Violet!" he exclaimed, as if struck by lightning.

She shook like a young orange-tree bent and broken in the violent seasonal storms. Her blonde hair fell loosely, untied, over her shoulder, her delicate, still dimpled cheeks were intensely flushed, her beautiful blue eyes were dim with tears. "Oh, Magnus, dear, dear Magnus, Magnus!" she moaned, her utterances half-distorted by increasing painful trembling.

The characteristic lineaments of his expressive countenance contracted. "What are you coming here for?" he asked.

"What am I coming here for?" she automatically responded. "Oh, Magnus, be clement, be lenient, be kind. Ah, I am sure that you are kind!" she pleaded in manifest distress and anguish.

Magnus made no reply.

She extended her quivering hand. "Let me enfold your hand as a token of gratitude for saving my father from ruin!"

"Don't mention your father!" he thundered, and then suddenly checked himself. "I do not desire any the least token of gratitude," he explained in a subdued voice.

"Magnus, dear Magnus," her tremulous voice enunciated with thrilling emotion. "You saved me from the humiliation of my father's imminent bankruptcy, you saved me from seeking charity for work, as it is to those orphan girls of mature age that are unskilled in shorthand, stenography or other mercantile trades. Yes, Magnus, you did save me, and oh, dear Magnus, I kind of think that you saved father to spare me—that you did it all for me!"

"No, Miss Trapson, I did it for myself."

His mention of only Miss Trapson almost choked her with sensation; the fact that he no longer addressed her by her maiden name disclosed a hopelessness of winning him back. "Oh, Magnus, Magnus, for God's sake call me Violet, call me once more Violet!"

"I can do that much for you, though," he answered mildly, being at the sight of her suffering and immensity of agony and feeling, reminded of her narrow escape from the deadly clutches of the White Plague.

She recurred to his allusion to egotistic motivity. "I cannot very well see how you could benefit by helping my father, who has so viciously and cruelly maltreated you."

"But I assure you, Violet, that I did it for myself. When I do a good turn, as they call it, to somebody, I do it for my own interest."

"That may be, but it is hard to judge your view from a common standpoint."

"From a point of amassing bank accounts it would act reversely, but I do not believe in money over and above my needs. I have already more cash than I require to pay my way, and I detest and hate to squander."

"Oh, you are generous!" she exclaimed; the bright silver-sheen in her eyes effulged admiring love through her brimming tears.

The subsequence was wrapped in silence. Neither moved. His eyes were as if nailed to the floor, and in his heart of hearts love challenged pride to a duel that meant a life for one and death to the other, as such elements cannot get along together on account of incompatibility. His heart was "a house divided against it-



self," and as he encouraged his pride with its inherent persistence of vows and pledges, and thus made it a dangerous rival for his love, which, thanks to creation, became very jealous and fought with true fortitude and perseverance, not only for its existence but for the dethronement of pride of Magnus' noble nature (in no affairs but those of love, did Magnus suffer from being vain and proud). Thrills of anxiety, suppliancy and humming hope vibrated in every quiver of her trembling figure. Pure prayers of imploring love shone with serene, fascinating splendor in the blue fountains of her eyes. Tremulous waves swept over her lips. The tiny, minute strings that chorused the tender yet loud cries of her heart threatened to burst. This was her trial for life. Those, and those only, that have gone through the cruel flames of burning, genuine, true love, but which has been spurned, can know the anguish and torment of Violet's soul at this crucial moment.

After many attempts, being foiled by her tremulous excitement, she succeeded to prolong her pensive pleading. "Dear Magnus, oh, if you knew how much I have mentally suffered since we parted; oh, if you knew how much I have repented for my inability 'to follow you out in the cold, the dark and uncertain'; oh, if you knew how I have chided and condemned myself for my dearth of strength and courage at the hour of our separation, when you rightly claimed my love and my devotion to our love and a sacrifice of luxuries and ease—a sacrifice that would have been but pleasure to me, had I been fortunate enough to cherish it." Magnus seemed as hard and immovable as an earth-rooted rock.

"If you knew that I lacked strength but not will to 'follow you out into the cold, the dark and the uncertain,' you would be reconciled with me, and press me again to your great, strong heart; and enfold me with all your magnanimous soul."

He appeared fossilized, but within him surged violent surfs, and the breakers of the sea of his emotion pounded with all the force of his heart against the wall of his breast.

Her dimpled face, bathed in the flood of her weeping, and her serene tears rippled down on three flowers, red, blue and white, pinned on her heart and effulged more charming, lustrous sparkles than those of the morning

dew. They crystallized in incomparable beauty, congeniality and holiness, the three great emblems of a conjugal fidelity.

But Magnus' pride refused to condescend to these manifestations corresponding to the inmost need of his own life.

"When I lost you, I lost life, I lost heaven, I lost everything in both worlds." She looked beseechingly into his stern face, but drooped instantly her head in an unascrivable despair. "Magnus!" she cried, and the penetrating sound of her voice pierced him like a knife, "I love you, you are my first love and I have not loved and never shall love any other man," her words drowned in sobs.

Magnus made no move; it was as if he heard or felt nothing. His assumption of unconcernedness and nonchalance was so apparent to Violet as to inflict still deeper wounds on her inflamed feelings.

"Magnus, Magnus, my love!" she pleaded with all the genuineness of her flexible nature, "when you proposed to me, you said you loved me, and I know you did, when you confessed the same love in my parents' presence and supplicated me to 'follow you out into the cold, the dark and the uncertain,' I know you told the truth, and I have heard and prayed that you always would love me, that you would not help but love me, that such great love as yours could not wither or die."

Still it seemed to her as if her plea did meet a solid rock, an unmeltable ice, a waveless water; but the tender pathos, the tremulous, vibrant flames, the pounding surges of pain ever present in his soul, but rendered of undescribably greater intension on account of her presence and entreating, prayer-hallowed appeal, brought into effect one of the greatest combats ever taking place in human affairs—a deadly duel of love and pride within a life so befittingly compatible in strength of virtue, intelligence and the science of practicability.

Violet opened her arms, and with sobs that shook all her frame—sobs akin to those when Magnus parted from her in Trapson's house—she knelt down and pronounced her final obtestations to him, but which were indistinct and broken by her immense tremor. "I could not say good-bye to you as you once said to me. I cannot part with you, even death could not make me."

Now Magnus had to answer; he looked up and their eyes met and his look at her form so prostrate with despair, she never forgot. There was in it such infinite hopelessness, agony and suffering as to render its reminder. She never saw sorrow so woefully portrayed. But he was even then determined to keep his resolve.

"I told you the time might come when you would test my love as I did yours; your love failed, why not mine? But whether I now love you or not makes no difference. When we parted I told you that the time might come when you would kneel before me and offer me your cowardly hand again, and I also asked, 'But will I be ready?' Now I am not ready, I am not going to accept your overtures, I will never accept the hand of her that deserted me when I needed human sympathy most, when I so craved for a cheering soul and a heart that felt for my lonely life. Before I met you I never knew what it was to be forsaken, but ever since we parted I have been forsaken—absolutely forsaken. You elected to leave me to my fate; I have elected to remain alone. If you had followed me 'out into the cold, the dark and the uncertain,' we would have been a happy couple now; if you had by so doing participated in my struggle for independence, you could have cherished its fruits with me, but you did no such thing; you have proved to be an unsteady, wavering and cowardly weakling, unfit for a strong and steady man as I am, consequently it is below my pride to receive you now with open arms. I am obliged to spurn you away from me now, and leave you to the abundance you have always enjoyed in your father's home. I succored him from bankruptcy, and I will see to it that you never suffer from want, but that is the limit of my inborn personal pride. You have my answer; good-bye!"

She gazed at him in terrible anguish. Convulsions seized all her delicate frame, then she fell on the floor in a deep swoon. A snowy pallor swept over her face, and she was motionless as if dead.

Then the inevitable happened. Those who possess immense will-power are not prone to desperation, but if such persons lose control of themselves it is apt to be calamitous, and such became the case with Magnus.

When he thought Violet beyond life in this world, it became disclosed to him that she was all this life to

him and that without her he could not live; then love prevailed over pride.

The poison that Lady Geraldine Maxwell had intended for a possible emergency was now in his pocket. He deposited it there when she died. Of course he did not know why he did it, but now he opened the box and swallowed the white powder fiercely, wildly; death, and nothing but death, was his choice. He had intaken a strong poison and it diffused all through his system with celerity. The resistance of his giant physique was only a matter of moments. Then he fell with a deep groan beside Violet insensible on the floor.

When he fell the jarring noise reached Helga and Goodwyn. Both realized the situation at a glance. A hurried telephone call brought a medical man on the spot. Violet was quickly restored to consciousness, and the genuine antidote the physician applied, coupled with Magnus' physical strength, rendered his resuscitation possible, but he was dazed and nervous for several days.

When Magnus' wife returned Violet was pressing a kiss on his lips. The world had been given back to him. And, oh, how happy they both were!

The clever physician was most truly a fortunate man. He had brought back to life two love-devoted souls, to be united forever, and he also witnessed the happiness of Helga and Goodwyn, who now announced their affiancement. Trapson and his wife were fetched to give their approval to Magnus and Violet's marriage, which was quickly and cordially granted. Magnus and Trapson reconciled and the old parents gave their blessing to the couple. Both wept from joy and the doctor laughed like a young boy.

A week later a double marriage was celebrated, and the two felicitous couples honeymooned to California.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-THIRD

## THORKELL NORDLAND IN NEW YORK

Thorkell, who promised Magnus, in exchange for his help, to be steadfast, kept his word. The glamoring saloons of New York, nor the glaring sights there, could not entice him into paths astray. He placed himself with the best tutors, the most accomplished and efficient masters of acoustics to be found in the city. Leading instrumentalists marvelled at him from the start. They discovered in him originality, so rare in the New World, which has been obliged to import artists from Europe on a large scale. He hired rooms fit for a respectable gentleman, and patronized cafes of a good repute and at moderate prices. He enjoyed the acquaintance, especially within musical circles, of many a genial young man and woman. He most naturally fell in love with a great number of beauties. He had love-affairs with some of them, which broke off as abruptly as they had begun. And as time went on in the great metropolis of America, he arrived at the solution that the best to be cherished had to come out of himself; that the consolation for his excitable heart, the gratification for the hunger of his soul, the cure for the craving of his suave feelings, had to come out of his universe of thought and sentimentality.

But as the salvation of nations depends on women, so the salvation of individuals does. And none knows it better than the man of genius. And Thorkell began to imagine the world's greatest woman somewhere, most likely far away, who loved and understood him thoroughly, which none of those he knew ever had. He imagined her as a queen of bodily beauty, a goddess of a soulful charm, a perfect woman of body and soul. He imagined her hair to enshroud a real primrose frame, but not to be tied up in a turnip-lump upon her head, as the hideous North American fashion prescribes. Her bosom was admirably well formed and heaved and sank

as the breast of the ocean. Her cheeks were rosier than any roses. And she possessed a pair of eyes deeper than infinity. She had attributes of a musical genius, and he settled on a hypothesis that she was a pianist fit to accompany for his violin music. He met her in wondrousome dreamlands, and when he was dreaming awake she abided with him—and no one else.

More and more this beautiful fairy of his imagination approached a reality of being of blood and flesh. He felt her linger by him wherever he was, listen to the strains he played, encourage him and stir the noblest of all prides, so that he made a greater effort to reach perfection and reach the summit of fame in his art, warn him against and protect him from temptations and dangers; in short, be his guiding star of love and hope. He took her for being the resplendence of the glory of goodness, of God—if there be one.

And so this rose of roses, this soul of souls, came to enrich, ennoble and enstrengthen his character and life for years. He became the sensation of New York and the eastern cities. His success developed into an accomplished fact. As a matter of fact, his conquest of the world was, to all foreseeing and farseeing artists, a foregone conclusion.

And in one of these all-embracing moments he composed a melody to his love's honor, and dedicated it to his "Queen of Every Woman." He wrote and rhymed the following words to it:

Queen of every woman,  
Worth a great man's goal,  
Thou art perfect beauty  
Of body and of soul.  
To thee I am singing  
A tender, loveful strain;  
What! Will my yearning  
And hope be all in vain?

Queen of every woman,  
To thee clings my heart;  
Will ill-fate forever  
Keep us far apart?

Can't sweet emotions,  
Born deep in my soul,  
Bring us together,  
Give my heart my goal?

Refrain: Queen of every woman,  
Wherever I may roam,  
I live to long for  
Thee and home, sweet home!

At times, however, a crepuscular anxiety, which comes uninvited to all truly humans, to all lovers of sunshine and day, overtook him. His precocious mind became tingled with lugubrious broodings, with rueful yearnings, a mingle of emotional seeking and regret for his unattainability of the capture of happiness of body and soul—the natural aim congruous to all conscious life. Doleful ruminations, but transcended by luciferous hope-enlivenments, kept him in spells that no words can define. Upon the devolution of his former longings, upon the graves of dead affections, especially his childhood's love, the castle of his last hope was built. It consisted of materials whose colors could not fade, whose beauty could not wither—thorough understanding, perfect realization of the foundation of everlasting love—convergence of aim.

Amongst his many encomiums about love we cite the following:

Before thy throne, oh love, I kneel,  
I give my life to thee in consecration,  
I pray to thee with soulful meditation,  
Thou goddess of him who can feel!

I pour my heart to thee, sweet love;  
Tuned with thy harps sublime, its soft pulsation  
Thrills forth in tender, subtle incantation,  
Dear yearnings, bright as stars above.

Pure love! My soul enfolds thy fire  
With throbbing ecstasies; I am all emotion,  
The whole of my own self is but devotion;  
My thoughts aflame, but thee desire.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

## YOUTH AND GENIUS

Eighteen years have emptied into the eternal ocean of time since Thorkell and Magnus last met. Magnus had to retire from his practice of law in Winnipeg on account of his wife's frail health and seek a milder climate. Goodwyn, his trustworthy partner and brother-in-law, could not endure the thought to stay behind. And both settled on a fruit farm in California. Both live in cosy and comfortable dwellings, surrounded by charming orchards. Goodwyn and his dutiful, healthy wife have been blessed with five children. Magnus and his delicate, generous Violet have one daughter, now sweet, sweet sixteen, the very duplication, nay, reincarnation of the unfortunate Lady Geraldine Maxwell, and bearing her full name, namely, Geraldine Maxwell Magnusson.

Her flaming thoughts, her profound judgment, not only superior to youth's, but surpassing most, if not all, matured women, the very qualities of the late Lady Geraldine Maxwell. Her sparkling eyes, black as flint; her cheeks redder than the reddest rose; her massive hair, dark as the night; her bosom big and beautifully shaped; her vivacity and ardor indicating emotions, if aroused, like the exposition of giant waves at sea; her contact, the sound of every word—all, yes, all, all is the same as that of Lady Geraldine Maxwell. She is not only the symbol of Lady Geraldine Maxwell, but Lady Geraldine Maxwell herself arrayed in blood and flesh.

Or so it was apparent to everybody. Magnus saw and watched her grow in the absolute likeness, in the very existence of his unhappy adores. And it contributed to the diminution of the cumber that the tragic remembrance of Lady Geraldine Maxwell had laid on his life. He took a great care and pride in facilitating and furthering her education. Detecting with his keen, observant eyes, roving around her from morning to night, her wonderful propensity for music, he had a lady well



accomplished in the technics of music, tutor her the art of piano playing at five.

And by unusual swiftness her adaptability brought her to a degree of honor at the California Conservatory of Music when she was only twelve years old. The delight and pride that Magnus and his devoted Violet took in their only love, their only Geraldine Maxwell, was a bliss that only "the heaven of the heart"—the heaven of a holy marriage—can give. Gloamings and evenings passed in undisturbed enjoyment under the flowing harmonies of her instrument, flooding her parents' hearts like soft spring-showers.

She preferred Thorkell Nordland's music. She adored and worshipped his genuineness of beautiful ideals, his masterly success in weaving blend of tones by colors of charming, yes, of celestial glory; and then, his tenderness and his universe of emotions was all-pervading, all-powerful to intone a feeling heart. Every strain, she understood, was love itself, embodied, incarnated, enthroned in its dominant magnificence of light and warmth.

Many a peaceful hour had Magnus hearkened to her playing the airs that were his favorite ones during his days of courtship, and that his friend he loved so much, Thorkell Nordland, had composed and taught him.

And when the artist himself paid him a visit after a period, as has been stated, of eighteen years, the pleasure evoked was great for both. And then Geraldine Maxwell obtained all the greatness of the master's works, for his own violin interpreted them in fullness of charm and beauty.

Magnus had just finished his forenoon routine of work when Thorkell Nordland arrived. Both recognized each other upon the instant. The handshake was a long one and thrilled with warmth of a true friendship.

The dinner table was laid. And Thorkell's presentation to Magnus' wife and daughter took place as they sat down to enjoy that charming California luncheon. And how Thorkell became astonished! There before him was Lady Geraldine Maxwell herself in the form of Geraldine Maxwell Magnusson. He heard right, did he not? She was his friend's daughter. And yet, how could all this be? He had played "Elegie" when she

was dying. And he had seen Magnus close her eyelids forever.

During the delicious luncheon, Thorkell was in an incomparable ecstasy. Never had he been face to face with such a majesty as the budding beauty opposite. And often did he glance across the table. And his glances were generously rewarded as behoved a queen of every woman, for that was she, he was sure about it right there and then. At the ceremony of their presentation their hands had enfolded, and since, the magnetic thrill of her hand lingered in his and from there streamed to his heart. In her eyes he saw all the universe. The incomparably bright lustres of them shone like the fixed stars in boundless space. Her greatness effulged her majestic magnificence in a focus of an eternal moment. And as they rose from the table, the words and tune of his composition, "The Moment," rushed through his raptured brain:

I saw a moment flying by  
In the twinkle of an eye;  
But voluminous as worlds afar,  
It shone like a silv'ry star.

I heard a word so softly slip  
By a movement of a lip;  
It sounded like a spring to me  
Of all eternity.

My heart entwined a fiery band  
By the pressing of a hand;  
Entranced by hope and joy divine,  
I live—for love is mine!

During the afternoon the old pals related to each other their experiences as they had taken place in the long sojourn of time during which they had never met. And Magnus learned that Thorkell had been gaining a continuous success in his art. He also learned that the musician had had numerous unsuccessful love affairs. He also understood that the wounds of Nordland's feelings inflicted by Amor, did heal by and by and that his lover glided into haze and oblivion, Alma Hoggart, most

surely, going with them. And then Magnus asked most naturally how all this had come about.

And then Thorkell divulged to him the greatest secret of his life. Magnus was deeply interested and moved. Thorkell's story of the ideal of his yearning, the queen of every woman, that he loved, and by whose side he lived, worked and conquered, dwelled with for years in perfect harmony, obeyed, adored and worshipped, seemed to open to Magnus the greatest godliness and divinity conceivable.

There was a long silence. And Thorkell knew perfectly well that one—yes, surely, surely one woman was being added to the already vast number of girls he had imagined that he did love. Was she to be lost too? Were all loves like a dreamy vision? These questions and those akin thronged his mind, while his life-long friend and greatest benefactor was pondering on the great mystery of God and eternity.

"So you have seen Geraldine Maxwell here in this house? Maybe you saw her also in New York."

Thorkell flushed. His whole frame quivered and a boundless sensation swept his soul. His heart throbbed intensely. His answers died in trembling motions of his lips and became an unintelligible murmur.

"I reckon you like her all right," said Magnus with a genuine sympathy.

Thorkell could not express his answers by words, on account of the rapture that all-dominated him. But Magnus could read that the effulgence of the artist's eyes, the mirror of the soul of his genius, spoke an eloquent approval of eternal significance.

"I can see that my daughter's likeness to Lady Geraldine Maxwell surprises you." And Magnus' words rang with sweetness.

"Yes," answered Thorkell, infinitely softly. "It leads into imponderance."

"Ever since she was a baby I have looked upon her with wonder and reverence."

Thorkell was silent.

"You remember that Lady Maxwell said on her death-bed: 'You will see me after I am deceased. I will be with you, warm your home and fill it with charm and bliss. I will sanctify it and make it a Heaven for him I love through all eternity'?"

"Yes, I do," replied Thorkell.

"Do you also remember her to say: 'I see a vision. Oh, how kind fate is to you, Thorkell Nordland! How happy you will be!'"

"I certainly do remember."

"Since my childhood days I have never concerned myself about any sort of religion. I have not fully, even yet, made up my mind as to what extent God exists."

Thorkell was so busy thinking that he could not reply.

"But I must acknowledge," went on Magnus, "that life continues in one form or another, and that the soul itself cannot die."

Thorkell made no comment. Before him the door had opened to the very mystery of life. At last he had only one unchangeable wish, namely, to love and live with Geraldine Maxwell forever, to be cheered and counselled by her, to be guided and protected by her and to be led by her to the high goal of eternal goodness. In her—and in her only—could he find God.

The silence was profound and beautiful. Geraldine Maxwell entered. Her walk was vivacious. All her manner was without trace of timidity or irresolution. She seated herself at the window, knitting red heart-leaves in blue and white. The dusk deepened and blended fondly with the hushed quietude. Thorkell looked often at her amidst his ecstatic thoughts. She responded nobly, truly. The shadows fled. The darkness itself turned to light at every glance they exchanged.

And what was theirs in common, the art, the genius, lured them irresistibly together. Without knowing, save in a sweet, holy dream, he had started to play on his Amato with her as an accompanist. Magnus hearkened to his old favorites again from the master that made them, but now after years of study, training and assiduous practice. And the great-hearted lawyer was more affected than he had ever, ever been. He was perfectly happy, for he saw that his greatest wish would come true.

The tide of the eve flowed into the sea of time on wings of harmonious music. The melodies almost glided into each other's embrace, giving every vibration a soulful spark, showing every shade and color of life.

It represented all stages of human existence—youthful passions, manhood hopes, maiden laments, the sighs of the unloved, the groans of the forsaken, the felicity of matured yearning. It effulged the brilliance of beauty and joy and intoned the gloom of woe. Even tunes of restful death and peaceful grave added veneration to these hallowed hours. But above all, it was love's eternal power, built on the same premise of the soul, that was the theme all through the evening.

At twelve o'clock Violet served coffee and cakes. And both entertainers and listeners relished it thoroughly well.

Thus Thorkell's and Geraldine Maxwell's first day together was a victory that spelled an eternal one.

Nordland was Magnus' guest of honor for three months, which was precious to both and worth more to the musician than all the forty-four years of his life combined. Sometimes he worked with Magnus in the orchard, thereby getting a good exercise for his body. Now and then he was writing new compositions or playing on his violin, assisted by Geraldine Maxwell. They always trailed together during twilight's stillnesses. The surroundings afforded increased enchantment. The moonlit nights of this incomparable epoch were an especial source of joy for these children of love—the highest expression of God's love in man.

And he had but been one-third of said stay with Magnus when he wrote an immortal serenade to Geraldine and rhymed the following words:

Midst thousands I would know thee and show thee the  
 beauty  
 Of my love all-tender with splendor of duty;  
 Midst millions I would greet thee and meet with emo-  
 tion,  
 Nursed with warmth of yearning and burning devotion.

All my songs do chime my sublime meditation,  
 Thrilled with sparks that shine, with divine consecra-  
 tion—  
 To thy charm, so bright, without night, without cool-  
 ness,  
 Heaven-hallowed spring, that can bring life its fullness.

Thou art God to me, as for thee I am pining  
 With my heart and soul, and my goal all-combining;  
 Thou art star at nights, light of lights at morn's rising,  
 Every voice of life, and its strife idolizing.

Thou art always nigh, as I high wend my winging,  
 In my dreams of days and the lays I am singing,  
 Breathing prayer streams with pure beams like above  
 me,  
 Whispering in thy ear, oh, my dear, how I love thee!

Once Magnus went on a short journey. Thorkell went with him. Violet, who always loved her home, her sweet nest so, so much, preferred to stay at home. And Geraldine Maxwell, of course, remained with her, although she would have loved to go. And while they were away only two nights, Thorkell missed Geraldine with the true fire of yearning. And he hummed Kerulf's "Last Night," either the first stanza in Danish:

"Jeg kunde slet ikke sove,  
 For Nattergalens Rost,  
 Some fra de dunkle Skove  
 Sig trykkte til mit Bryst;  
 Jeg aabnede Winduet stille  
 Og stirret i Mulmet hen  
 Og lod hver Elskogs trille  
 Mig synge, mig synge til dig igen."

or he hummed its last stanza in English:

"Think not that I can forget you,  
 I could not though I would,  
 I see you in all around me;  
 The stream, the night, the wood,  
 The flowers that slumber so gently,  
 The stars above the blue;  
 Oh, Heaven itself, my darling,  
 Is praying, is praying for you!"

No reader of this story needs to be in doubt that Thorkell and Geraldine Maxwell were engaged in that word's truest sense from the time they first saw each

other. And then, dear readers of mine, should we not allow something for the missing link, the mystery about it all? Were they not engaged in New York?

But our clever Thorkell Nordland had always been a coward in love overtures. He dreaded the "No," and doubted the force of attraction that art has on the sensitive feminine soul. He was generally beaten in his combats against this dangerous weakness. His numerous betrothals—which, as we know, could not mature—were wrought more by pugnacious approaches of his sweethearts than himself.

The three precious months seemed to both Thorkell and Geraldine of a very brief passage. The very last night had arrived, he being scheduled to leave next morning on a tour filling engagements in Seattle, Vancouver, San Francisco and Los Angeles. And now, yes, now he was inspired with more courage than ever, it seemed to him. Now he was determined to ask her, if need be, but which is always equally new and always equally hard to ask.

It was a glorious night. The full moon shone in the azure blue vaults of the sky. They were walking side by side on the sandy shore. The wavelets touched their feet. They stopped and gazed out on the sea, resting calmly like a slumbering giant. Their questful spirits marvelled the Pacific Ocean, this queen of the oceans that holds well nigh half of the globe in its bosom. They then looked at each other and the beams of the blue and black seas of their eyes met in a focus with all the universe at their feet.

Automatically, her hand was in his. Both trembled, and magnetic and telepathic currents interflamed with the velocity of light itself.

"I must leave tomorrow. But, oh! I wish we never had to part." He pressed her hand tenderly, passionately.

"It need not be," she responded, enfolding his neck and pressing a kiss on his lips that was a brimful beaker of happiness.

"But you are only a youth. But I am somewhat advanced in years. I am well nigh twice older than you."

"No, you are not old. Your soul is young, younger than mine. Art never grows old. Genius is everlast-

ing youth." And the embrace and caress were genuine, sublime, perfect, because two really spiritual, art-devoted youths united their work and goal.

They walked homewards silently, hand in hand.

Nordland sat down in an easy chair. Geraldine nestled softly at his breast. And oh! how her womanly chest heaved with joy! Oh! how all her strong, beautiful, pure body and soul were in unison with this frail, weakly-built man. Her full eyes looking through his glasses into his; her health-painted cheeks resting with his, lean and wan; her rich hair not only shrouding all her own body but completely hiding his sloping shoulder. But love built on true understanding and mental sympathy knows no such differences.

And in the profundity of his realm Thorkell realized that he had found her—this Queen of Every Woman—in New York. What was it to be a martyr for a time when one, in the end, obtained such blessing, such eternal victory from Providence! What was it to dive to the very bottom of the sea of grief, when so abundantly rewarded by the Great Cause, who joined his and Geraldine Maxwell's heart, who gave him this wonderful gift! This incomparable woman, this woman of eternal worth, this rose of roses, this soul of souls!

Magnus stood in the open door, gazing at them in silent wonder. He called his wife. Both were moved to the depths of their hearts. Magnus walked towards them, put one hand on his daughter's head and the other on her lover's head and said solemnly: "I bless thee, my child, and your lover. May you be happy forever."

Then Thorkell rose and their hands enfolded, and none the less their hearts.

"Do you remember when I said that I was your friend?"

"Yes, I do remember."

"Now I felicitate you as the same friend, for I know that Geraldine Maxwell will always be true, steadfast and devoted to you."

And Thorkell had to express the happiness of his life on his violin. The melody was coming into birth in his mind. Geraldine accorded without notes, save her heart. And Thorkell played and hummed the words that he rhymed with his immortal composition:



My love, my love, I pray to thee,  
My own dear saviour, dwell with me;  
To thee my highest yearning clings,  
Thou givest my thoughts immortal wings.

To thee I dedicate my soul,  
To thee I consecrate my goal,  
To thee I turn my hope and faith,  
To thee I look when facing death.

My bliss is with thy holy heart,  
My life and thine will never part,  
But follow as I follow thee  
To God—in all eternity!

## CHAPTER THIRTY-FIFTH

## "THE HOLIEST TEMPLE"

Six years have passed. The great artist, Thorkell Nordland, now world-famous, and his intelligent, devoted wife, Geraldine Maxwell, have just returned from a prolonged trip all over the globe. They are surrounded with true friends, namely, the families of Magnus and Goodwyn, who immensely rejoice in their happy union.

As we close this story, their charming girl of five, the third Geraldine Maxwell and the embodiment of the other two, is trilling forth with her tiny fingers an accompaniment to Thorkell's composition to these Danish words by Plough:

"Nu skal du sove godt og sundt  
Og vinne Nemme og Kraeften;  
Og trippe igen i Stuen rundt  
Og nynne mig Sangene efter.  
Og engang skal du se dig om  
I Verdens og Kundskabs Rige,  
Men altid blive god og from  
Og altid min egen Pige!"

When the playing of the beautiful lullaby is over, he bends down and speaks in her ears. "Is not my precious love tired?"

"No, not yet. Let us go on."

Then he plays Gounod's "Chantez, Riez, Dormez" (Sing, Smile, Slumber), the first stanza of which is thus:

"Quand tu chantes bercee  
Le soir entre mes bras  
Entends tu ma pensee  
Qui te repond tout bas.  
Ton doux chant me rappelle les plus beaux  
de mes jours,  
Ah! Chantez, chantez, ma belle, etc."

And the wonder-child glides quick as arrow over the notes of the massive piano, chiming its subtle harmonies, and Mrs. Nordland joins in with her mellow, clear voice.

"One more," entreats the little fairy, zealously.

Moved to the depth of his heart, the master of the world's greatest art plays his own "Happiness," a masterpiece that never dies, with warmth of ecstasies that even surpasses those that characterized him all through his great career. And the child-genius makes the piano interpret the import of the infinitely tender variations of its accompaniment, while its blend with the master-tones of his violin and the sweet voice of her mother, fills the chamber with celestial bliss.

When the incomparable notes are dying out he sighs enraptured.

"Oh, my own dear enchantress."

Then he presses her to his heart with a genuine fatherly fervor and kisses her again and again.

The dusk enshrines the hallowed abode. The fuel in the fireplace is burning cheerily, and its warmth and glow rhymes in with the divine sanctity of a father, mother and child.

"Rest, little angel of ours," says he as he puts her tenderly on the soft, silken lounge.

"Yes, I will slumber for awhile and dream of music and love," answers she, as she closes her heavenly eyes.

And oh, how her words are entrancing!

He draws his beautiful, intelligent and educated wife to his heart, her large, charming eyes lustring with holy love, her admirably formed bosom heaving with joy. And while embracing her and stroking her massive hair he says solemnly, reverently:

"The holiest temple under the stars is the house that love has built, and the holiest altar in the world is the fireside, when loving husband and loving wife and the sweet babes gather around."

The End.